Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe

Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions

Edited by

Andrew Colin Gow (*Edmonton, Alberta*)

In cooperation with

Sylvia Brown (*Edmonton, Alberta*)
Falk Eisermann (*Berlin*)
Berndt Hamm (*Erlangen*)
Johannes Heil (*Heidelberg*)
Susan C. Karant-Nunn (*Tucson, Arizona*)
Martin Kaufhold (*Augsburg*)
Erik Kwakkel (*Leiden*)
Jürgen Miethke (*Heidelberg*)
Christopher Ocker (*San Anselmo and Berkeley, California*)

Founding Editor

Heiko A. Oberman †

VOLUME 191

The titles published in this series are listed at *brill.com/smrt*

Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe

An Album Amicorum for Charles Zika

Edited by

Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger

BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Cover illustration: The Witch of Endor. Detail from Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen, *Saul visiting the witch of Endor*, 1526, oil on wood. Photo: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, SK-A-688.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Religion, the supernatural, and visual culture in early modern Europe : an album amicorum for Charles Zika / edited by Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger.
pages cm. — (Studies in medieval and reformation traditions, ISSN 1573-4188 ; Volume 191)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-90-04-29726-5 (hardback : alk. paper) — ISBN 978-90-04-29901-6 (e-book) 1. Religion and culture—Europe—History. 2. Art and religion—Europe—History. I. Zika, Charles, honouree. II. Spinks, Jennifer, editor.

BL65.C8R45423 2015
200.94—dc23

2015023008

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual "Brill" typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities.
For more information, please see www.brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1573-4188
ISBN 978-90-04-29726-5 (hardback)
ISBN 978-90-04-29901-6 (e-book)

Copyright 2015 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Hes & De Graaf, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Rodopi and Hotei Publishing.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.
Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.
Brill has made all reasonable efforts to trace all rights holders to any copyrighted material used in this work. In cases where these efforts have not been successful the publisher welcomes communications from copyright holders, so that the appropriate acknowledgements can be made in future editions, and to settle other permission matters.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Contents

Acknowledgements IX
List of Illustrations X
Notes on Contributors XIV

Introduction: Scholarship, Friendship and Border-Crossing 1
Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger

PART 1
Supernatural Agency and Communities of Belief

1 **The Collaboration from Hell: A Plague Strike Force at S. Pietro in Vincoli, Rome** 19
Louise Marshall

2 **The Demonic Possession of Richard Dugdale** 50
Brian P. Levack

3 **Salem Girls (1692): Problems of Gender and Agency** 68
E. J. Kent

4 **"Ringing of the Bells by Four White Spirits": Two Seventeenth-Century English Earwitness Accounts of the Supernatural in Print Culture** 83
Dolly MacKinnon

PART 2
Religion and Cultural Authority

5 **"It is a Great Disgrace for Our City": Archbishop Antoninus and Heresy in Renaissance Florence** 105
Peter Howard

6 **Endor and Amsterdam: The Image of Witchcraft as a Weapon in the Political Arena** 126
Hans de Waardt

7 **Deep Down in Spirituality: Efforts of Seventeenth-Century New Netherlanders to Access God** 140
Donna Merwick

8 ***Paraluther*: Explaining an Unexpected Portrait of Paracelsus in Andreas Hartmann's *Curriculum Vitae Lutheri* (1601)** 161
Leigh T. I. Penman

PART 3
The (Un)natural World

9 **"Making Feast of the Prisoner": Roger Barlow, Hans Staden and Ideas of New World Cannibalism** 187
Heather Dalton

10 **Signs that Speak: Reporting the 1556 Comet across French and German Borders** 212
Jennifer Spinks

11 **Disorder in the Natural World: The Perspectives of the Sixteenth-Century Provincial Convent** 240
Susan Broomhall

12 ***De Profundis*: Linear Leviathans in the Lowlands** 260
Larry Silver

13 **The Ferocious Dragon and the Docile Elephant: The Unleashing of Sin in Rembrandt's *Garden of Eden*** 283
Shelley Perlove

PART 4
Artefacts and Material Culture

14 **Salience and the Snail: Liminality and Incarnation in Francesco del Cossa's *Annunciation* (c. 1470)** 305
Patricia Simons

15 **Luther Relics** 330
Lyndal Roper

16 **The Art of Making Memory: Epitaphs, Tables and Adages at Westminster Abbey** 354
Peter Sherlock

17 **The Pope's Merchandise and the Jesuits' Trumpery: Catholic Relics and Protestant Polemic in Post-Reformation England** 370
Alexandra Walsham

Index of Names and Places 411

Acknowledgements

Many people helped at important stages in the development of this volume, and the introduction details the different ways in which individuals contributed.

Here, we also wish to thank our contributing authors, who have been a pleasure to work with over the several years that we have been preparing this volume.

In addition, we would like to pay tribute to Lyndal Roper for her advice, and to series editor Professor Andrew C. Gow and to Arjan van Dijk, Ivo Romein and Pieter van Roon at Brill for their encouragement and oversight of the project.

Ted Colless and Jürgen Eichberger deserve special thanks for their support, and we cannot conclude without warmly acknowledging the help provided by Stasia Zika.

Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger

List of Illustrations

1.1 S. Pietro in Vincoli, Rome, entrance wall and left nave wall, showing the original location of the Sebastian altar (on the entrance wall) and the contiguous 15th-century fresco (on the first pier of the left nave wall) 20

1.2 Antoniazzo Romano (attrib.), *The Roman plague of 680 AD*, fresco, c. 1476, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli 21

1.3 Antoniazzo Romano (attrib.), *The Roman plague of 680 AD*, detail: angel and demon, fresco, c. 1476, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli 22

1.4 Antoniazzo Romano (attrib.), *The Roman plague of 680 AD*, detail: St Sebastian appears to a holy man and the holy man communicates his vision to the pope, fresco, c. 1476, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli 26

1.5 *St Sebastian*, mosaic icon, 7th or 8th century, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli 29

1.6 *Charu and Vanth*, wall painting, 3rd century BC, Tarquinia, Tomb of the Anina family 33

1.7 Belbello da Pavia, *The Visconti Hours*, 1420s, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Ms. Landau Finaly 22, f. 95r: *God sends the plague on the first-born Egyptian children* 40

1.8 Giovanni del Biondo, St Sebastian Altarpiece, 1370s, Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, detail: *St Sebastian stays the plague of 680 AD* 42

6.1 Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen, *Saul visiting the witch of Endor*, 1526, oil on wood 127

7.1 Map of New Netherland, circa 1660 141

8.1 Paracelsus, from Hartmann, *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* (1601), sig. A2r, woodcut 162

8.2 Martin Luther, from Hartmann, *Curriculum vitæ Lutheri* (1600), sig. (:)ii^{r}, woodcut 170

9.1 Roger Barlow, "A Brief Somme of Geographia," folio 87 verso, The British Library, UK 199

9.2 Ritual Killing of Captive, from Hans Staden, *Warhaftige Historia und Beschreibung eyner Landtschafft der Wilden, Nacketen Grimmigen Menschfresser Leuthen in der Newenwelt America gelegen* (Marburg: Andreas Kolbe, 1557), woodcut 202

10.1 Anonymous author and artist, *Verzeichnuss des Cometen so im Anfang des mertzens erschinen ist MDLVJ* ([Strasbourg?]: [Thiebold Berger?], [1556]), woodcut 218

10.2 Anonymous author and artist, *Warhafftige Beschreibung/ was auff einen jeden sollichen Com*[*m*]*eten gescheyen sey* ([Strasbourg]: n.p., 1556), woodcut 220
10.3 [Valentin Neuber?] and anonymous artist, *Ein erschro*[*e*]*cklich wunderzeichen/ von zweyen Erdbibemem/ welche geschehen seind zu Rossanna vnnd Constaninopel/ zum M.D.L.VI. Jar* (Nuremberg: Valentin Neuber, 1556), woodcut 221
10.4 Paulus Fabricius and anonymous artist, *Der Comet im Mertzen des Lvi. Jars. Zu*[*o*] *Wien in Osterreich erschinen* (Vienna: Hans Singriener, 15 March 1556), woodcut 222
10.5 Anonymous artist, title page, in Joachim Heller, *Practica/ auf das M.D.LVII. Jar . . .* (Nuremberg: Joachim Heller, 1556), woodcut 225
10.6 Anonymous artist, title page, in Johann Hebenstreit, *Des Cometen so dieses 1556. Jars von dem 5. tag Marciij an bis auff den 20. Aprilis zu Wittemberg erschienen bedeutung* (Wittenberg: n.p., 1556), woodcut 226
12.1 Hans Rudolf Manuel Deutsch (design by), Map of Iceland, in Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographei* (Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1550 [VD 16 M 6693] University Library, Heidelberg, A 219 B Folio RES), woodcut 265
12.2 Jan Saenredam (?) after Hendrick Goltzius, Stranded whale at Zandvoort, engraving, 1594. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Light-Outerbridge Collection, Richard Norton Memorial Fund 272
12.3 Jan Saenredam, Beached Whale at Beverwijk, engraving, 1602 275
13.1 Rembrandt, *Adam and Eve*, etching, 1638 284
13.2 Albrecht Dürer, *Adam and Eve*, engraving, 1504 288
13.3 Lucas van Leyden, *Adam and Eve*, from the series, *History of Adam and Eve*, engraving, 1529 289
13.4 Albrecht Dürer, *Descent into Hell*, from the *Engraved Passion*, engraving, 1512 290
13.5 Attributed to Rembrandt, *Adam and Eve*, ink drawing 293
13.6 Rembrandt, *Adam and Eve*, ink drawing, 1638 294
14.1 Francesco del Cossa, *The Annunciation*, oil on poplar, c. 1468–70. Gemaeldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden (Inv. Gal. Nr. 43) 306
14.2 Snail, detail of fig. 14.1 307
14.3 Carlo Crivelli, *The Virgin and Child with Saints Francis and Sebastian*, egg and oil on poplar, 1491. Presented by Elizabeth Mary, widow of the second Marquess of Westminster, 1870 (NG807). National Gallery, London 311

14.4 Pietro di Francesco Orioli, *Adoration of the Christ Child with Saints St Bernardino of Siena and Anthony of Padua*, c. 1480. Museo di Arte Sacra, Massa Marittima (no. 14) 313
14.5 Antonello da Messina, *Martyrdom of St Sebastian*, oil on wood transferred to canvas, 1478. Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden (Gal.-Nr. 52) 317
14.6 Filippo Lippi, *The Annunciation*, c. 1438–40. San Lorenzo, Florence 321
15.1 Anon., *Martin Luther*, in Martin Luther, *Ein Sermon geprediget tzu Leipßgk* (Leipzig: Stöckel, 1519), woodcut 340
15.2 Hans Brosamer, *Martin Luther*, 1530, woodcut printed by Wolfgang Resch 341
15.3 Cranach workshop, cartoon of Martin Luther, Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin. KdZ 4794 343
15.4 Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Wittenberg altarpiece*, 1547 344
15.5 Workshop of Lucas Cranach the Elder, *Martin Luther*, c. 1540 346
15.6 Johann Wilhelm Reiffenstein, Sketch of Martin Luther, 1545(?) 347
17.1 Wenceslas Hollar, *This Burden Backe to Rome* (London, 1641), woodcut 371
17.2 Anon., illustration from John Geninges, *The Life and Death of Mr Edmund Geninges, Priest, Crowned with Martyrdome at London the 10. Day of November, in the Yeare M.DXCI* (St Omers: Charles Boscard, 1614), 93–4, woodcut 382
17.3 Edward Oldcorne's eye, in contemporary silver reliquary. Stonyhurst College, Lancashire 384
17.4 George Napper's signature. Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Downside Abbey, Bede Camm papers (Files on the English Martyrs) 385
17.5 Thomas Lusher, Miniature wooden shrine for devotion to the Passion, 1623. Stonyhurst College, Lancashire 389
17.6 Anon., *A Lively Picture Describyng the Authoritie and Substaunce of Gods Most Blessed Word, Weyghing agaynst Popish Traditions*, woodcut illustration with handwritten date 1573 found pasted in *The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, Three Worthy Martyrs, and Principall Teachers of this Churche of England* (London: John Day, 1572) 394
17.7 *A Discovery of the Jesuits Trumpery, Newly Packed out of England* ([London: Henry Gosson, c. 1625]), woodcut 396

17.8 'Certaine of the Popes Merchandize lately sent over into Englande', in B[ernard] G[arter], A New Yeares Gifte, Dedicated to the Popes Holinesse, and all Catholikes Addicted to the Sea of Rome (London: Henry Bynneman, 1579); fold-out plate, woodcut 400

17.9 Anon., illustration in Robert Pricket, *The Jesuits Miracles, or New Popish Wonders* (London: [Nicholas Okes] for C. P[urset] and R. J[ackson], 1607), woodcut 401

Notes on Contributors

Susan Broomhall
is Winthrop Professor of Early Modern History and an Australian Research Council Future Fellow at The University of Western Australia. She is author of a range of texts that explores the experiences of women and men in early modern Europe, including as readers and authors (*Women and the Book Trade in Sixteenth-Century France*, Ashgate, 2002), in religion (*Women and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France*, Palgrave, 2005), in the governance of selves and others (with Jacqueline Van Gent (eds.), *Governing Masculinities in the Early Modern Period: Regulating Selves and Others* (Ashgate, 2011); with David G. Barrie (eds.) *A History of Police and Masculinities, 1700–2010* (Taylor and Francis, 2011)), and most recently, as readers of disaster literature.

Heather Dalton
is a Research Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies at the University of Melbourne, supported by an Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award. The current focus of her research is transnational relationships and family ties in fifteenth and sixteenth century Atlantic trading networks and voyages of discovery. Her book, *Merchants and Explorers: Roger Barlow, Sebastian Cabot and Networks of Atlantic Exchange and Discovery, 1500–1560*, will be published by Oxford University Press in 2016. Since her PhD was awarded in 2008, Heather has lectured and tutored at the Universities of Melbourne and Sheffield, been a member of The Cabot Project at the University of Bristol, and an Associate Investigator with the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions.

Hans de Waardt
lectures on Cultural and Early Modern History at VU University in Amsterdam. He obtained his doctoral degree in 1991 at Erasmus University in Rotterdam on a dissertation about the history of the belief in witchcraft, sorcery and countermagic in Holland which appeared as *Toverij en samenleving: Holland 1500–1800*. In 2005 he published *Mending minds: A cultural History of Dutch Academic Psychiatry* (Erasmus Publishing, 2005). The history of witchcraft, medical history, and the history of early modern humanism are themes that are discussed in many of his publications. He is now working on the intellectual backgrounds of Johan Wier, the Dutch physician whose fame is mainly based on his opposition to the witchcraft trials.

Dagmar Eichberger
is a member of the Department of Fine Arts in Heidelberg (on leave until 2016). She currently holds a position at the University of Trier as member of the EU research project Artifex: "Redefining Boundaries: Artistic training by the guilds in Central Europe up to the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire". At the end of her time living in Australia, she edited a collection of essays with Charles Zika, *Dürer and his Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2005). She is the author and editor on several books on the role of women and the arts in early modern Europe: *Leben mit Kunst—Wirken durch Kunst. Sammelwesen und Hofkunst unter Margarete von Österreich, Regentin der Niederlande* (Brepols, 2002) as well as the catalogue accompanying the 2005 Mechelen exhibition: *Women of Distinction. Margaret of York and Margaret of Austria*. Her most recent edited book is *Women at the Burgundian Court: Presence and Influence* (with Anne-Marie Legaré; Brepols, 2011). She is currently preparing a collection of essays on *Visual Typology in Early Modern Europe. Continuity and Expansion* (with Shelley Perlove).

Peter Howard
is an associate professor in the Department of History at Monash University, and Director of Monash's Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. He teaches courses related to the history of Christianity, the Florentine renaissance, and the history of Europe more generally. In 2012 he was awarded the Vice-Chancellor's Award and University medal for Teaching Excellence. He has published widely in the areas of Italian Renaissance history and medieval sermon studies, including *Creating Magnificence in Renaissance Florence* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2012) and *Beyond the Written Word: Preaching and Theology in the Florence of Archbishop Antoninus* (Florence: Olschki, 1995). He is currently pursuing an Australia Research Council Discovery Project entitled "Cultures of Belief in Renaissance Florence", and is also part of another project: "Imagining Poverty: conceptualizing and representing poverty and the poor in mendicant inspired literature, preaching and visual art 1220–1520." He has held fellowships at the European University Institute, Florence, and 'Villa I Tatti': the Harvard University Centre for Italian Renaissance Studies, where he was also Visiting Professor in 2007. He is convenor of the Prato Consortium for Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

Eliza (E. J.) Kent
is an independent scholar who works on witchcraft research. Her recent book, *Cases of Male Witchcraft in Old and New England, 1592–1692* (Brepols, 2013) examines men and masculinities in the context of witchcraft prosecution.

Her current research focus is the Salem witch trials, looking at the cultural work witchcraft beliefs performed for accusing communities in 1692.

Brian P. Levack
is the John E. Green Regents Professor in History and Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Austin. His books include *The Civil Lawyers in England, 1603–1641: A Political Study* (Clarendon Press, 1973); *The Formation of the British State: England, Scotland and the Union, 1603–1707* (Clarendon Press, 1987); *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (3rd ed., Pearson Longman, 2006); *Witch-Hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics and Religion* (Routledge, 2008); and *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (Yale University Press, 2013). He is co-author of *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999) and editor of *The Witchcraft Sourcebook* (Routledge, 2004) and *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Dolly MacKinnon
is a Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Queensland. Author of *Earls Colne's Early Modern Landscapes*, (Ashgate, 2014); she is also the co-editor of three essay collections: *Exhibiting Madness* (Routledge, 2011), *'Madness in Australia* (UQP, 2003), and *Hearing Places* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007). Her most recent essays on early modern charity appeared in Stephanie Tarbin and Susan Broomhall (eds.), *Women, Identities and Political Cultures in Early Modern Europe* (Ashgate, 2008), and her work on music appeared in Elizabeth Ewan and Janay Nugent (eds.), *Finding the Family in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* (Ashgate, 2008), *History of Psychiatry* (2006), and *Parergon* (2001). Her recent article " 'That brave company of shadows': Gender, National Identity, and the Formation of Children's British History in Alison Uttley's *A Traveller in Time*" appeared in *Women's History Review* (2011).

Louise Marshall
is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Art History and Film Studies at the University of Sydney, where she teaches late medieval and Renaissance art. She has degrees from Melbourne University, where she was fortunate to study with Charles Zika, and the University of Pennsylvania. She has published widely on Italian Renaissance plague images as well as on late medieval devotional imagery and early representations of purgatory. Recent publications include "Getting Out of Jail Free, or, Purgatory and How to Escape it in Spanish Art", *Cathedral, City and Cloister: Essays on Manuscripts, Music and Art of Spain, Italy*

and the New World, ed. Kathleen Nelson (Ottawa: Institute of Mediaeval Music, 2011) and "A Plague Saint for Venice: Tintoretto at the Chiesa di San Rocco", *Artibus et Historiae* (2012).

Donna Merwick
is the author of four books on New Netherland: *Possessing Albany, 1630–1710: The Dutch and English Experiences* (Cambridge University Press, 1990); *Death of a Notary: Conquest and Change in Colonial New York* (Cornell University Press, 1999); *The Shame and the Sorrow: Dutch-Amerindian Encounters in New Netherland* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss Across Time* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013). After completing her PhD at The University of Wisconsin, Merwick took up an appointment at the University of Melbourne in 1969. She retired as an Associate Professor/Reader in 1995. She is presently a Long Term Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University (Canberra) and an Adjunct Associate Professor at Swinburne University of Technology (Melbourne).

Leigh Penman
is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Queensland, and is currently an associate member of the History Faculty of the University of Oxford. He is the author of *Unanticipated Millenniums: The Problem of Chiliastic Thought in Post-Reformation Lutheranism* (Springer, 2015), and more than two dozen articles on aspects of early modern intellectual and religious history.

Shelley Perlove
Professor Emerita of the History of Art of the University of Michigan-Dearborn, presently teaching at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Dr. Perlove specializes in Baroque art, most particularly, the religious art of Bernini, Guercino, and Rembrandt. She is the author of two books published by Penn State University Press that have been honored by major awards: *Bernini and the Idealization of Death; The Blessed Ludovica Albertoni and the Altieri Chapel* (*1990*), and more recently with Larry Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009). Prof. Perlove has written more than 35 articles and book chapters, and has curated five exhibitions. Co-edited with George Keyes, *Drawings in Midwest Collections: The Age of Bernini, Rembrandt, and Poussin*, will be published by Notre Dame University Press in 2015, and *Visual Typology in Early Modern Europe: Continuity and Expansion*, co-edited with Dagmar Eichberger, is expected to appear in 2016. Dr. Perlove, who has received UM-D campus awards for excellence in

teaching and research, served on the Board of Directors of the Historians of Netherlandish Art, and was honored to deliver the Plenary Address for the Sixteenth Century Society in 2011.

Lyndal Roper
first became interested in early modern history when she took a course on the German Reformation with Charles Zika at the University of Melbourne. She now teaches at the University of Oxford, where she is the first woman, and the first Australian, Regius Professor of History. Her books include *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (Yale University Press, 2004) and she is currently writing a biography of Luther.

Peter Sherlock
is Vice-Chancellor of the University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia. He completed undergraduate studies at the University of Melbourne where he was taught by Charles Zika, prior to doctoral studies at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. His research investigates commemoration, memory, and gender relations, principally in early modern European societies. He is author of *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Ashgate, 2008), and editor, with Megan Cassidy-Welch, of *Practices of Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Brepols, 2008). His current project is a history of the monuments of Westminster Abbey from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries.

Larry Silver
holds the Farquhar Professorship in Art History at the University of Pennsylvania. He previously taught at Berkeley and Northwestern. A specialist in paintings and graphics of the early modern period in Northern Europe, he has written numerous recent scholarly monographs: *Rubens, Velázquez, and the King of Spain* (with Aneta Giorgevska-Shine; Ashgate, 2014); *Pieter Bruegel* (Abbeville Press, 2011); *Rembrandt's Faith* (with Shelley Perlove; Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009); *Marketing Maximilian* (Princeton University Press, 2008), *Hieronymus Bosch* (Abbeville Press, 2006), and *Peasant Scenes and Landscapes* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006). He co-edited *The Essential Dürer* (with Jeffrey Chipps Smith; University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) and also two organized major print exhibitions: *Grand Scale: Monumental Prints in the Era of Dürer and Titian* (2008–09) and *Graven Images: The Rise of Professional Printmakers in Antwerp and Haarlem, 1540–1640* (1993–94). He served as President of the Historians of Netherlandish Art and the College Art Association, where he also co-founded the on-line reviews journal, *caa.reviews*.

Patricia Simons
is Professor in History of Art at the University of Michigan and an Australian trained at the University of Melbourne. She is author of *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History* (Cambridge University Press, 2011) and editor with Bill Kent of *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy* (Clarendon Press, 1987). Her scholarly interests include the visual culture of Renaissance Europe with a special focus on the representation of gender and sexuality. Her work, published in anthologies and peer-review journals like *Art History, Renaissance Quarterly* and *Renaissance Studies*, has investigated such issues as portraiture as a mode of fictive representation, medical discourse in relation to visual culture, the representation of male and female homoeroticism, and the widespread role of humour and also inventiveness in material culture.

Jennifer Spinks
is Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Manchester. From 2009 to 2012 she was an Australian Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Melbourne, Australia, where she worked on a collaborative project with Charles Zika and Susan Broomhall. Her publications include *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Pickering and Chatto, 2009); *Early Modern Women in the Low Countries: Feminizing Sources and Interpretations of the Past* (with Susan Broomhall; Ashgate, 2011); and *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster* (co-edited with Cathy Leahy and Charles Zika, and accompanying a collaboratively-curated exhibition; National Gallery of Victoria, 2012). She is currently working on a study of wonder books in early modern Reformation and Counter-Reformation northern Europe.

Alexandra Walsham
is Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Trinity College and of the British Academy. She has published widely on the religious and cultural history of early modern Britain, including *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford University Press, 1999) and *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England 1500–1700* (Manchester University Press, 2006). Her most recent book, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford University Press, 2011) was joint winner of the Wolfson History Prize. Among her current projects is a study of the connections between generational and religious change in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Introduction: Scholarship, Friendship and Border-Crossing

Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger

Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen's 1526 painting the *Witch of Endor* depicts an extraordinary scene of biblical magic. It chaotically spills over with grotesque demonic beings and bizarre ritual acts, and it centres upon the fearsome and commanding female figure at its centre.[1] This painting visually combines a range of important themes in this volume as well as paying tribute to the work of Charles Zika, whose ongoing work on the visual tradition of the witch of Endor—linking up disparate sources and periods, but fundamentally grounded in the early modern world—is well known to scholars.

For more than thirty years, Charles Zika's influential work in early modern European history has been recognised internationally for its remarkable scholarship and path-breaking methodology. Covering fields such as magic and witchcraft, the history of visual culture, religious reform, and early modern colonial history, Zika's work is honoured here in a volume taking up some of his key methodological and empirical themes. *Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe: An album amicorum for Charles Zika* encompasses two mutually supportive aims. Firstly, it celebrates his highly-regarded scholarship on Reformation Europe, print culture, and the visual and cultural history of the early modern European witch-hunts. Secondly, it draws together an intersecting range of essays that address the broader cultural impact of religious change in a cultural context.

Deeply engaged with the 'cultural turn' in religious history (interpreted to encompass beliefs, practices, and the supernatural dimensions of the early modern world), this book presents seventeen essays that explore a range of visual, textual and material sources to provide new insights into the cultural and spiritual worlds of early modern Europeans. These essays tease out details that make us think in new and surprising ways about the materiality and intensely felt nature of early modern religious cultures evident in fragmentary records and even Protestant 'relics'; reassess communal and individual responses to the disordered natural world, from possession cases to

1 A detail is found on the cover of this volume. On the painting see Hans de Waardt's essay in this volume, fig. 6.1, and Charles Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 156–59.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_002

reports of natural disasters; and at times take a fresh look at canonical figures and events, from Martin Luther to the Salem witch trials. The work is often deeply interdisciplinary—as is Charles Zika's own work—and profits from the rich intersection of religious history, the history of science, art history, and the intersecting histories of the print and manuscript culture in recent scholarship. The four sections of this book are framed around the following themes: "Supernatural Agency and Communities of Belief", "Religion and Cultural Authority", "The (Un)natural World" and "Artefacts and Material Culture"; the essays are introduced in more detail at the conclusion of this essay. First, however, this introduction assesses the trajectory and significance of Zika's work in these areas of academic research.

History in Motion

Many of Charles Zika's friends and colleagues would agree that his life seems to have been shaped by physical and also intellectual border crossings.[2] He was born in 1945 in former Czechoslovakia to Miloslav Zika and Heda Zika (*née* Schäffer). In August 1948, he travelled across the border with his parents into Austria and then on to Vienna. This was the first stage of the family's eventual relocation to Australia, and they arrived by boat on 14 May 1949. In her opening address at a 2009 conference in honour, and in a recent essay, Lyndal Roper has beautifully described how in the rush and confusion of the departure, one of his small shoes was left behind.[3] With metaphorical feet planted in both Europe and his new home of Melbourne, Australia—where he grew up alongside brothers John and Paul—Zika went on to study at the University of Melbourne and to specialise in Middle Eastern Studies and Renaissance History. Charles and Stasia Zika set out for Germany in 1971 where he conducted research at the University of Tübingen under the guidance of Heiko Oberman. Charles prepared a Master of Arts thesis on Johannes Reuchlin for the University of Melbourne; a work of such depth that some years later it was

2 The editors warmly thank Lyndal Roper for discussions about this material, and Julie Davies and Michael Pickering for an advance copy of their co-edited collection, *A World Enchanted: Magic and the Margins, Essays in Honour of Charles Zika*, Melbourne Historical Journal Research Series no. 2 (Parkville: The Melbourne Historical Journal Collective, 2015).

3 Lyndal Roper, Introduction, in ibid. See below for the 2009 conference.

translated into German and published as a book.[4] It was during this time that he intensively pursued research into the role of Hebrew texts on the occult, laying the groundwork for his interests in the supernatural, print culture, the nexus of intellectual and cultural history, and the concept of the religious and cultural outsider.

This time in Germany also consolidated his deep engagement with Germany as a country as well as an historical topic. It seems to have confirmed his intellectual border-crossing and especially his innovative use of images as historical sources—an approach that has led to deep scholarly connections as well as great friendships with historians and art historians alike.

Charles Zika returned to Australia in late 1973. He lectured at Monash University for several years, then took up a position at the University of Melbourne in 1975. The latter university would become his institutional home, and indeed remains so in his current role as Professorial Fellow and Chief Investigator in the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, 1100–1800. From his early years at the University of Melbourne, the intense collegiality and intellectual spark provided by colleagues across Melbourne institutions during a very vibrant era for the study of Renaissance and early modern history were important in his development as a teacher and scholar. He also maintained and further built connections beyond Melbourne and indeed beyond Australia. He has held numerous fellowships in the United States and Germany; most recently an invited fellowship in the *Lichtenberg Kolleg* at the Göttingen Institute of Advanced Studies (2010–2011).

Charles Zika's international research has also been paired with a commitment to teaching and mentoring. For many years, he taught a four-week study course to Australian students, entitled "Renaissance Nuremberg and Central Europe". Both editors of this volume shared teaching this European summer school with him on different occasions and could observe at first-hand his love of and close engagement with European art and culture. His qualities as a dedicated teacher contributed substantially to the success of this innovative form of teaching on site. Prague, Vienna, Nuremberg, Munich, Augsburg, Würzburg, Bamberg—always enthusiastic and never tired of looking at more cities, more historic sites and more artefacts, he generously passed on his knowledge to the

4 Charles Zika, *Reuchlin und die okkulte Tradition der Renaissance* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1998).

participants in this course and motivated more than one student to go on to study early modern history in more depth.[5]

Communities and networks of all types are intensely important to Charles Zika at a personal and professional level, and his warm personality, rigorous scholarship and ground-breaking research has fostered an unusually wide circle of connections and a series of close mentoring and collaborative relationships. A conference titled "Cultural Forms and Ideology in Early Modern Europe and its Colonies" was held in his honour at the University of Melbourne in September 2009, and co-convened by Elizabeth Kent, Sarah Ferber, Jennifer Spinks and Lyndal Roper, in close cooperation with Dagmar Eichberger.[6] It was a chance to celebrate those connections through bringing together a group of historians, art historians, and indeed humanities scholars from other fields. A lively series of papers showed not just how he had connected with many people on an individual level, but also how his scholarship had prompted colleagues over the years to see and question sources and concepts in new ways. To name only some of the most important, these ranged from his pioneering work in the use of images as historical sources, and his productive combinations of cultural history, social history and the history of print to address the transmission of ideas about gender in the early modern world.

This edited volume builds upon that conference. The intellectual intensity and stimulation of the event made it clear that synergies across the work of his closest colleagues and academic friends had the potential to come together in an edited collection that would be a testimony to his achievements around the time of his retirement from teaching, and also form part of exciting, cross-disciplinary trends in the field of early modern studies concerning communal and subjective experiences of religion and the supernatural expressed of across a variety of media. The realities of preparing an edited collection required a narrower focus than the wide-ranging conference. In order to forge a coherent collection of essays and to focus upon the late medieval and early modern periods in which Charles Zika's own scholarship has been based, the decision

5 For further reflections on Charles Zika's influence as a teacher, see Lyndal Roper, Introduction, in Davies and Pickering, *A World Enchanted*; and on his postgraduate supervision see the essay by E. J. Kent in the same volume.

6 "Cultural Forms and Ideology in Early Modern Europe and its Colonies: A Conference in Honour of Professor Charles Zika", 12–13 September, The University of Melbourne, 2009. The generous assistance of Stasia Zika is gratefully recorded here. The editors also wish to express their thanks to conference co-convenors Sarah Ferber, E. J. Kent and Lyndal Roper for assistance when planning this collection of essays.

was taken not to solicit contributions addressing material prior to c.1450 or the modern era.[7]

Interdisciplinarity: History and Art History

For Charles Zika, a specific painting or woodcut has often been the stimulus for asking new questions, for rethinking or even questioning existing attempts at explanation. In his important monograph of 2007, *The Appearance of Witchcraft*, he describes how, during his time in Germany, he stood before Hans Baldung Grien's painting *The Weather Witches* (1523) in the Städel Museum in Frankfurt.[8] He was so to speak 'bewitched' by the power of the image and seized with curiosity about the phenomenon of early modern beliefs about witchcraft. This fostered some of the complex interrelationships between the visual and the supernatural that have shaped his scholarship. His research on witchcraft images all across Europe is wide-ranging and has brought to light material that was virtually unknown to the scholarly community. His visual archive encompasses iconographically-dense oil paintings as well as less complex frescos depicting acts of witchcraft in remote churches in Germany and Sweden. His particular engagement with print and book culture has prompted him to unearth manuscript illuminations, book illustrations and individual prints in collections all over the world.

Characterised by an immense curiosity about intellectual movements that was shaped by the forces of social history, Charles Zika's work engaged with the transmission of cultural ideas: from the ritual and social processes associated with pilgrimage in Germany before the Reformation period, to the visual

7 The editors would especially like to acknowledge the contributions of presenters at the conference who for various reasons were not able to contribute to the present volume: Nicholas Scott Baker, Michael Bennett, Megan Cassidy-Welch, Matthew Champion, Samaya Chanthaphavong, Liam Connell, Julie Davies, Nicholas Eckstein, David Garrioch, Robert W. Gaston, Claudia Guli, Linda C. Hults, Keith Hutchison, Catherine Kovesi, Pam Maclean, Philippa Maddern, Peter Matheson, Klaus Neuman, Michael Pickering, David Rollison, Charlotte Colding Smith, and Jacqueline Van Gent. A larger group of scholars who for logistical reasons were unable to attend the conference are also warmly acknowledged here. The conference included a poster session by postgraduate and early career researchers that led to a second volume of essays: Davies and Pickering, *A World Enchanted.*

8 The role in commissioning Charles' book played by fellow Australian Bob Scribner, whose own work on visual religious propaganda shaped scholarship in such fundamental ways, should be noted here.

commemoration of the Luther centenary in 1617.[9] He made his mark as a historian in fields of research and using approaches that had been scarcely developed before his engagement with them, building upon his innovative scholarship on the nexus between humanism and the supernatural in the work of Johannes Reuchlin and others in the sixteenth century.

Charles Zika's research on the history of early modern witchcraft beliefs was first undertaken in the infancy of a now particularly large and vibrant field of research.[10] Studies into the supernatural and into the history of witchcraft beliefs and prosecution were initially shaped by a nexus of social history, religious history, and legal history, and were then transformed by questions about gender and about cultural identity. Zika's work has been and remains particularly attentive to issues of gender, and his 2007 book *The Appearance of Witchcraft* demonstrated in particular how different ways of representing women's bodies and their social roles fundamentally shaped broader social ideas about witchcraft and the threat posed by it.

The methodological impact of Charles Zika's research has been as significant in opening up topics that had been considered marginal. He has, in this way, distinctively shaped aspects of the cultural and social history of religious and supernatural beliefs.[11] His work forms part of a historical shift in thinking about the use of images as historical sources which prompted historians to look more carefully at non-textual sources, to draw upon insights from the discipline of art history, and to seek new ways of understanding societies at different levels through sources can provide new ways of understanding shared and transmitted beliefs, assumptions, and fears in pre-modern societies. This has also fed into his more recent work in the field of the history of the emotions,

---

9 Charles Zika, "Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred in Fifteenth-Century Germany", *Past and Present* 118 (1988): 25–64, and Charles Zika, "The Reformation Jubilee of 1617: Appropriating the Past in European Centenary Celebrations", in D. E. Kennedy, ed., *Authorised Pasts: Essays in Official History*, (Melbourne: History Department, The University of Melbourne, 1995), 75–112. Both essays have been reprinted in Charles Zika, *Exorcising Our Demons: Magic, Witchcraft and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

10 On the current state of the field see Brian P. Levack, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), which includes Charles Zika's essay "Images of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe", 141–56.

11 Charles Zika, "Writing the Visual into History: Changing cultural perceptions of late medieval and Reformation Germany", in his *Exorcising Our Demons: Magic, Witchcraft and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 523–51; first published in *Parergon* 11 (1993): 107–34.

in which he has taken a central role in a large-scale research project that aims to rethink how historians might access the emotional lives of individuals and communities in the pre-modern world.[12]

Charles Zika has not simply 'borrowed' methods and sources from art history, but engaged with it as a discipline with its own challenges and demands. His profound knowledge of art history, both on a theoretical and on a practical level, is paired with an exceptional capacity to understand and interpret art and its iconographic traditions. He was born to a family with a strong interest in art, and this was a gift that he has built upon throughout his life. No trip overseas ever goes by without a visit to an art museum or a temporary exhibition. Insiders will confirm that there is (almost) no visual subject that cannot ignite his curiosity or trigger his encyclopedic mind to reflect further upon what he has encountered.

From an art historian's point of view, the strength of his research lies in his firm conviction that art objects and visual signs in the broadest sense possible are important means of expressing human concerns. To him, artefacts are equal in significance to written documents, requiring equal attention. But he recognizes that art functions differently to textual sources; he thus treats art as an independent language, a category of its own. His awareness of and sensitivity to the contextual framework of each individual image guides him in readings artefacts and provides a strong and persuasive foundation to his arguments.

Charles Zika's fascination with art and performativity informs his research on pilgrimages and processions, including his sustained work over a long period on the Benedictine monastery of Mariazell in Austria. Statues, sacred spaces and ex votos that are associated with such cults are at the heart of his quest into the religious worlds of past generations. A more secular side of performativity is addressed in the illustrated manuscripts that document the Nuremberg carnival processions (*Schembartlauf*). These civic events involved men in colourful costumes and elaborate floats, and he has most recently published on a hitherto unknown manuscript in the private collection of Kerry Stokes.[13]

---

12 See his ongoing *History of Emotions* research project: http://www.historyofemotions.org.au/our-research/research-programs/change/change-project-list/c-zika-research-projects.aspx. Amongst a range of publications, see Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, eds., *Disaster, Death and the Emotions in the Shadow of the Apocalypse, 1400–1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, forthcoming 2015/16).

13 Charles Zika, "Celebrating the *Schembart*" and "*Schembart Buch*: The Book of the Nuremberg Shrovetide Carnival" in Margaret M. Manion and Charles Zika, *Celebrating*

This last piece of research brought Zika into close contact with an exhibition project at New Norcia outside Perth, and he has been involved in other exhibitions and associated events that communicate through both word and image. In support of Irena Zdanowicz and Cathy Leahy, he contributed to a major Albrecht Dürer exhibition in Melbourne at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1994. In conjunction with this exhibition, Charles Zika and Dagmar Eichberger organised an international symposium at the University of Melbourne.[14] Over a decade later, another fruitful cooperation between the National Gallery of Victoria and the University of Melbourne took place. "The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster" was the title of an exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria that Charles Zika and Jennifer Spinks initiated and carried through in 2012 as part of an Australian Research Council-funded project, working in curatorial collaboration with Petra Kayser and Cathy Leahy.[15] As an exceptionally good networker and communicator, Charles Zika succeeds in bringing together internationally renowned scholars who are prepared to cross the limits of their own area of specialization. This means thinking in new ways about the evidence offered by sources of all types, from visual to material to textual, from the canonical to the fragmentary, and paying as much attention to 'poor' quality sources as to dazzling, highly accomplished artworks and texts.

Framing the Contributions to This Collection

This volume comprises a series of essays characterised by often interdisciplinary work, which opens up new questions about religion, the supernatural and visual culture as core aspects of the new cultural history of early modern Europe.

Charles Zika is renowned for his work on the ways that shared but also contested understandings of supernatural forces and diabolical agents developed in late medieval and early modern Christian Europe. This volume accordingly opens with a section titled "Supernatural Agency and Communities of Belief." The essays in this section explore the supernatural dimensions of the early

---

World and Image 1250–1600: Illuminated Manuscripts from the Kerry Stokes Collection (Perth: Australian Capital Equity, 2013), 56–73.

14 Irena Zdanowicz, ed., *Albrecht Dürer in the Collection of the National Gallery of Victoria*, exh. cat. (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 1994); Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika, eds., *Dürer and his Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, Press, 1998, 2005).

15 Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, eds., *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster*, exh. cat. (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2012).

modern world. These essays do so through a broad range of source types—from images to texts to sounds—and through often interdisciplinary approaches to reconstructing and accessing the fears, beliefs and sensory worlds of early modern individuals and communities.

Louise Marshall's essay unpacks the cultural, social, and theological layers of a late fifteenth-century fresco in the Roman church of S. Pietro in Vincoli. The fresco represents a posthumous miracle associated with St Sebastian and includes grim scenes of plague devastating Pavia. Bodies are piled up indiscriminately in the foreground of the image and the epidemic is shown affecting the town's rich and poor residents alike. Beliefs about the cause of plague were intimately bound up with Christian concepts of sin, and as such plague was interpreted as visitations by God upon communities. Through a close reading of the fresco's subject matter and context, Marshall analyses its highly unusual depiction of a joint 'strike force' in which an angel and a devil work as a team to inflict plague on the town.

Demonic agents participate in rather different partnerships in Brian Levack's essay about the late seventeenth-century demonic possession of Richard Dugdale. Throughout this notorious case the demon's battles to exert its mastery over Dugdale's body and soul took centre stage at spectacular public exorcisms. Protestant ministers—most notably Dissenting minister Thomas Jolly—struggled to gain authority to cast out the diabolical forces. Levack's analysis of these public events and contemporary printed debates about them reveals the challenges of interpretation and action posed by cases of demonic possession in post-Reformation England. Levack uses the Dugdale case as a jumping-off point to explore heated contemporary debates about the 'reality' of supernatural events and to reassess the often-overlooked motivations and agency of the possessed man.

An examination of agency is also central to E. J. Kent's reassessment of the young female accusers—or 'Salem Girls'—whose testimonies lay at the heart of the 1692 Salem witch trials. Kent carefully unpicks a historiographical tradition based around terms like fraud, hysteria, and exhibitionism. She asks to what extent the girls and young women who accused their neighbours, in fact exercised power as "reasonable historical actors". Narratives of bewitchment formed the core of their testimony against other members of the community, and Kent argues that in assessing this material historians should pay more attention to persistent, shared beliefs about the frightening threats to individuals and communities posed by witchcraft.

Dolly MacKinnon's essay demonstrates how we can understand the supernatural experiences and beliefs of early modern people by paying attention to sources that tell us about the auditory world in which they lived. She explores

letters and reports that circulated for decades reporting two famous cases of ghostly ringing bells in seventeenth-century Yorkshire and Essex. She describes how bells and bell ringing were significant carriers of meaning, and how in seventeenth-century England they ensured that "the trappings of an unfinished Reformation remained in the ears and memories of many in these congregations". While they were audible reminders of the Catholic soundscapes of the past, the ghostly warning issued by the bells also took on special resonance in a Protestant world in which the providential hand of God was constantly seen and heard.

The essays in the next section, "Religion and Cultural Authority", explore how different forms of religious experience were accessed, adapted and circulated in the early modern world. Linking up with the previous section's focus on aspects of the supernatural, the first two essays in this section address fears about witchcraft and their wider intellectual and religious significance in Florence and Amsterdam. Other essays in this section explore different dimensions of religious experience and authority. One essay questions the way historians access spirituality and religious experience in seventeenth-century Dutch America, while another is concerned with the establishment of religious and intellectual authority through book publishing.

Peter Howard explores how fears of heresy and witchcraft became fused in Florence in the first half of the fifteenth century. He enriches our knowledge of this wider European trend which was to lead to the growing number of prosecutions and executions for witchcraft in the early modern period. He presents a richly detailed case study of physician Giovanni Cani da Montecatini's execution as a heretic and enchanter in 1450. Howard demonstrates how wider civic and religious concerns—and harshening attitudes—can be traced through the preaching of individuals like Archbishop Antonius. Cani's association with the 'heretical' Fraticelli group and his ownership of treatises on natural magic might have singled him out for relatively moderate penitential requirements in the earlier part of the century. But growing anxiety about the diabolical aspects of magic and the destabilising power of heretical groups meant that by 1450 Cani's crimes resulted in his execution as a heretic.

Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen's 1526 painting of the witch of Endor forms a jumping-off point for Hans de Waardt's nuanced assessment of the threat presented by witchcraft in sixteenth-century Holland, and the connections of this to broader religious anxieties. He demonstrates this through an analysis of intellectual, religious, and cultural circles around Van Oostsanen, the wealthy merchant Pompeius Occo, and the scholar Alardus of Amsterdam. Like Howard, de Waardt stresses the fusion of witchcraft fears with anxieties about

religion, and concludes that the painting ultimately reflects greater concern with Saul's heresy than with the witch of Endor's magic. He describes how an orthodox Catholic intellectual old guard defended its position in the face of Protestantism partly through the 'weapon' of witchcraft. This continued to be played out across several decades via factionalism within families, fed down through Pompeius' son Sybrant Occo, and accusations of witchcraft against prominent women, Marie Hollesloten and her daughter Jacoba Bam.

Donna Merwick likewise illuminates the ways in which religious identities and forms of authority shaped communities and individual spirituality in her close, richly contextualised analysis of Governor Peter Stuyvesant and Dutch Reformed minister Domine Johannes Polhemius in the mid seventeenth-century New Netherlands of North America. By teasing apart the rich possibilities that lie in fragments of text, Merwick offers a masterful demonstration of how historians might access the deeply personal but also effortful ways in which religious belief might be performed, sustained, administered and encouraged. She draws out the distinctive aspects of this Calvinist community—not least its physical landscape—as well as its continuities with Christian traditions.

Leigh T. I. Penman likewise demonstrates the richness of what may at first glance appear to be a minor moment in a source. He offers a micro history of a single, exceptionally puzzling page within an early seventeenth-century book, and asks what a portrait of Paracelsus is doing in a 1601 printed edition of a verse-drama on Martin Luther by Andreas Hartmann. Is the use of the printed portrait—incorrectly substituting Paracelsus for Luther—a simple mistake, or a much more complex case of hidden meaning waiting to be decoded? Penman weighs up the evidence and uses these questions to illuminate early modern cultural memories of Luther and Paracelsus; both divisive sixteenth-century figures whose representations continue to reveal fault-lines in printing communities and radical religious identities in early seventeenth-century German lands.

The third section of the collection is titled "The (Un)natural World". It explores various strategies that were applied by early modern writers and artists to portray and explain 'unnatural' occurrences, such as cannibalism among the Indians in South America, natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes and wondrous events such as the sighting of comets and exotic sea monsters. In most cases, a distinction is made between interpretations based on first-hand experiences and reports that reacted to hearsay. The specific 'reading of these signs' depended by and large on the frame of mind and the set of beliefs each individual adhered to.

Heather Dalton's study investigates the practice of cannibalism among the Amerindian tribes as reported in the early writings by Roger Barlow (1541) and

Hans Staden (1557). While Staden's text received much attention in studies on the early explorations of the New World, Barlow's text was largely ignored due to fact that it was not published until 1932. Dalton analyzes the quality of his eyewitness account of the Tupí-Guaraní Indians and their outlandish customs. A close comparison of the two accounts, plus shorter texts by Pigafetta and Ramirez provide a detailed picture of what kinds of information circulated in Europe in the early modern period. The question arises as to how such reports were constructed in order to meet the expectations of its western audiences.

Jennifer Spinks' essay focuses upon a single event that was widely reported across Europe: the 1556 comet, sometimes also known as the 'Charles' comet. She describes how various northern European authors used cheap, illustrated broadsheets, short pamphlets and compendia books of wonders to authoritatively identify, describe and interpret its appearance. While authors would later tend to associate the comet with the abdication and death of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, contemporary writers generally seized upon its urgent religious meanings for communities. Spinks argues that the 1556 comet—though long neglected by historians in favour of the 1577 comet, whose observation led to major scientific advances—offers a an unusually rich opportunity to think about how textual and visual information circulated across European borders for polemical purposes that shaped religious identities.

Susan Broomhall investigates how the nuns of the Benedictine Abbey of Beaumont-lès-Tours responded to reports of a wider range of anomalies and disasters in the natural world. The nuns' journal and the convent's chronicle both provide insight into how religious and political conflicts were perceived and shaped by women living within an enclosed world. In the journal, the nuns paid close attention to the emotional responses of local communities to these disastrous episodes. The chronicle exemplifies how this religious community defined its place within the Catholic world at large and how they expressed their sense of survival through organizing processions and setting up rituals for regular prayer. Giving thanks for divine protection in times of strife and heightened anxiety was their way of coming to terms with the supernatural.

Larry Silver pursues the question of how early modern audiences reacted to stranded whales and other sea monsters. His examples span ancient sources, medieval bestiaries, illustrated maps, and early modern compendia on natural history and zoology. Within these different accounts, the contact with the exotic whale reflects the questions that occupied author and reader alike. The whales were often understood as divine signs that sometimes also occurred in combination with celestial events. Even if not regarded as a manifestation of Satan (Leviathan), there emergences were often interpreted as bad omens or portents of disaster, or, alternatively, as a message with political dimensions

sent by God. In the course of the early seventeenth century eye-witness accounts increasingly moved away from such symbolic or allegorical interpretations in favor of scientific studies—even while there remained a complex blend and often continuity of different world views and belief systems.

The symbolic meaning of exotic animals such as elephants and dragons is also of central concern in Shelley Perlove's essay. In her analysis of Rembrandt's etching of *Adam and Eve*, she contextualizes his interpretation of the scene by linking it with the exegetical tradition of this Old Testament text in the early seventeenth century. Calvinists, Remonstrants, Mennonites and other Protestant sects attached particular significance to the *Fall of Man* in view of their specific interpretation of the history of salvation. The *Fall of Man* was linked closely with human sexuality and the temptations to which Adam and Eve had succumbed. Perlove points to Dutch bible translations, and in particular the *Statenbijbel* that was published only one year prior to Rembrandt's etching. The unusual rendition of the snake as a ferocious dragon-like creature is explained by contemporary readings of this dominant figure as an embodiment of the devil. Further, the elephant in the background is interpreted as an image of Satan; albeit a wild animal that has been appeased and overcome by Christ.

The final section of this volume, "Artefacts and Material Culture", builds upon Charles Zika's strong interest in the art and material culture, founded on his conviction that a deep knowledge of iconography allows us to decipher and interpret attributes and symbols, and above all that art and material objects are carriers of signs. This applies equally to the large bronze snails that support the shrine of Saint Sebald in Nuremberg and to the meaty sausages that witches carry around on their cooking forks. Many of his colleagues likewise share his attention to iconographic details and to the use of tangible objects as part of a fascination with the visual and material emanations of early modern culture.

In her close reading of Francesco del Cossa's *Annunciation*, Patricia Simons pursues the fundamental question of how to interpret Italian Renaissance art by focusing on the naturalistic depiction of a snail on the painted ledge of the Dresden painting. She analyses how art historians deal with pictorial ploys such as this oversized gastropod. Simons stresses the fact that the artist consciously played with the threshold between pictorial space and the observer, between the divine plan and humankind. Franciscan Marian devotions and typological associations shed light on the meaning that was traditionally associated with this lowly animal. In addition, the contemporary discourse on "learned ignorance" and on the "simultaneity of opposites"—as addressed by

Nicholas of Cusa, Nicholas Albergati and St Bernardino of Siena—is of crucial importance to her argument.

Lyndal Roper follows a different path. She is interested in the process of glorifying and memorialising Martin Luther, starting from the early modern period and going up to the nineteenth century and beyond. In contradiction to Luther's teaching, his contemporaries collected a large body of Luther 'relics' or paraphernalia of everyday life that instigated what she describes as "Protestant pilgrimage routes" and "Lutheran tourism." While many of these contact relics were passed down from family to family, some have obscure provenances and are in all likelihood forgeries. Roper demonstrates that Luther himself took great care in stylizing his persona through mass-produced portraits of himself. This attempt to increase his influence and to strengthen his reform movement through visual art objects demonstrates a wider fascination with material culture as a tangible expression of the cult of personality.

Another intriguing form of cultural tourism is portrayed by Peter Sherlock. His essay examines how continental visitors to London explored the royal burial site of Westminster Abbey, which became a major tourist attraction in the course of the sixteenth century. Paul Hentzner's travel account of 1598, for instance, provides detailed information about which monuments visitors were able to see and what they made of their experience. Late fifteenth-century wooden tablets with English and Latin texts were attached to many sepulchres with the aim of explaining whom the tombs represented and what each person had achieved in life. Sherlock's analysis of three specific types of text demonstrates the transitory nature of such tomb decorations. Epitaphs, tables and adages could shape memory in very different ways depending on the historical context.

Alexandra Walsham discusses critical attitudes towards Catholic forms of devotion in post-Reformation England. This includes the ongoing practice of relic worship and the veneration of sacramentals as an act of spiritual defiance. Apart from hiding and fragmenting relics that had been removed from their containers by Protestant radicals, Catholic lay people developed strategies for clandestinely continuing with their traditional forms of worship. Walsham demonstrates that persecuted Catholics such as Thomas More, John Fisher and several seventeenth century missionaries were treated as 'new saints'. Contact relics and personal belongings were collected in similar ways to those associated with Martin Luther in Lyndal Roper's essay. They were shared and distributed among Catholic communities both in England and on the continent. These developments were accompanied by the publication of protestant tracts that warned of Catholic 'trifles' and other manifestations of idolatrous ephemera.

These brief summaries of the essays that make up the four different sections of the collection demonstrate important trends in scholarship; from new assessments of the significance of the supernatural, to the transmission of beliefs, ideas and concepts across different communities in different forms and media, and the 'cultural turn' in historical work that addresses religion. Above all, these essays frequently demonstrate an inter-disciplinary fusion of textual, iconographic and material analysis, asking new questions about the early modern world and revealing the experiences of people that lived then in new ways. This is work that not only pays tribute to Charles Zika's own scholarship, but also reflects its long-term and ongoing impact.

References

Works Published after 1800

Davies, Julie, and Michael Pickering (eds.). 2015. *A World Enchanted: Magic and the Margins, Essays in Honour of Charles Zika*, Melbourne Historical Journal Research Series no. 2. Parkville: The Melbourne Historical Journal Collective.

Eichberger, Dagmar, and Charles Zika (eds.). 1998/2005. *Dürer and his Culture.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kent, E. J. 2015. Charles Zika as a Postgraduate Supervisor. In *A World Enchanted: Magic and the Margins, Essays in Honour of Charles Zika*, (eds.) Julie Davies and Michael Pickering. Melbourne Historical Journal Research Series no. 2. Parkville: The Melbourne Historical Journal Collective.

Leahy, Cathy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika (eds.). 2012. *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster*. Exhibition catalogue. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria.

Levack, Brian P. (ed.). 2013. *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Roper, Lyndal. 2015. Introduction. In *A World Enchanted: Magic and the Margins, Essays in Honour of Charles Zika*, (eds.) Julie Davies and Michael Pickering. Melbourne Historical Journal Research Series no. 2. Parkville: The Melbourne Historical Journal Collective.

Spinks, Jennifer and Charles Zika (eds.), *Disaster, Death and the Emotions in the Shadow of the Apocalypse, 1400–1700*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, forthcoming 2015/16.

Zdanowicz, Irena (ed.). 1994. *Albrecht Dürer in the Collection of the National Gallery of Victoria*. Exhibition catalogue. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria.

Zika, Charles. 2007. *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe*. London and New York: Routledge.

———. 2013. Celebrating the *Schembart* and *Schembart Buch*: The Book of the Nuremberg Shrovetide Carnival. In *Celebrating World and Image 1250–1600: Illuminated Manuscripts from the Kerry Stokes Collection*, (eds.) Margaret M. Manion and Charles Zika, 56–73. Perth: Australian Capital Equity.

———. 2003. *Exorcising Our Demons: Magic, Witchcraft and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe*. Leiden: Brill.

———. 1988. Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the sacred in fifteenth-century Germany. *Past and Present* 118: 25–64.

———. 2013. Images of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe. In *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*, (ed.) Brian P. Levack, 141–56. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 1995. The Reformation Jubilee of 1617: Appropriating the Past in European Centenary Celebrations. In *Authorised Pasts: Essays in Official History*, (ed.) D. E. Kennedy, 75–112. Melbourne: History Department, The University of Melbourne.

———. 1998. *Reuchlin und die okkulte Tradition der Renaissance*. Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke.

———. 1993. Writing the Visual into History: Changing cultural perceptions of late medieval and Reformation Germany. *Parergon* 11: 107–34.

PART 1

Supernatural Agency and Communities of Belief

CHAPTER 1

The Collaboration from Hell: A Plague Strike Force at S. Pietro in Vincoli, Rome[1]

Louise Marshall

As a tribute to Charles Zika's magisterial studies on witchcraft and demonology, and his close attention to visual images as sites of cultural production, this essay focuses on a highly unusual depiction of what I would call a joint angelic and demonic plague strike force. This surprising pairing of normally mortal enemies is found in a fresco in the Roman church of S. Pietro in Vincoli (Figs. 1.1 and 1.2), depicting an Early Christian epidemic viewed through the prism of contemporary experience, when bubonic plague was a constantly recurring threat. The unlikely duo of angel and demon dominate the centre of the composition (Fig. 1.3). While pope and cardinals process through the corpse-strewn streets, the angel guides the demon to a palace and watches, seemingly with approval, as he strikes the portal with his spear. The dire fate of the building's inhabitants under the menace of combined angelic and demonic assault is signalled by a dead body sprawled face down over the threshold. The pair's joint handiwork is everywhere evident: in the foreground, a pile of corpses threatens to spill over into the actual space of the nave, while behind them, another man lies collapsed on the very steps of St Peter's itself, his outstretched right leg directly aligned with the threatening diagonal of the demon's spear.

This essay interrogates the sources and significance of this extraordinary representation of angels and devils collaborating in the role of humanity's executioners.[2] Such active collusion between normally opposing forces is virtually unprecedented, but has not been previously remarked upon. Exploration

1 With thanks to Pat Simons for her comments on this essay.

2 Although theological terminology distinguished between the Devil (Lucifer or Satan) and his followers (demons, from Greek *daimones*, halfway spirits between gods and humans), the latter were often conflated with their leader and subsumed under the generic name of devils, a practice followed in this essay. See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 156; Charles Zika, "Putting the Devil Back into the History of Christianity, 1000–1800," in *God, the Devil and a Millennium of Christian Culture*, (eds.) Charles Zika and Ellen Warne (Melbourne: RMIT, 2004), 62, 74 n. 6.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_003

FIGURE 1.1 *S. Pietro in Vincoli, Rome, entrance wall and left nave wall, showing the original location of the Sebastian altar* (*on the entrance wall*) *and the contiguous 15th-century fresco* (*on the first pier of the left nave wall*).
PHOTO: AUTHOR.

of this representation of plague's causes sheds new light on Renaissance responses to the disease, both in terms of explanatory models and potential sources of supernatural aid. My study investigates what such images can tell us of contemporary conceptions of the nature and temper of the protagonists, and of the operation of the heavenly hierarchy. How, for example, can this punitive representation of angelic agency be reconciled with the traditionally beneficent activity of angels as divine messengers and guardians of humanity? Is the demon acting from pure malice, or under higher instructions, as the presence of the angel would suggest? How do such images relate to belief in divine causation of the disease? And most crucially of all, what might such an understanding of plague's origins imply with regards to strategies for avoidance and protection?

S. Pietro in Vincoli and the 680 Plague

The commissioning, subject and location of the fresco are closely tied to the cult of the Roman martyr St Sebastian as a plague protector, and to contemporary events in Rome. Located on the first pier of the left nave of S. Pietro in Vincoli,

FIGURE 1.2 *Antoniazzo Romano* (*attrib.*), The Roman plague of 680 AD, *fresco, c. 1476, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.

FIGURE 1.3 *Antoniazzo Romano* (*attrib.*), The Roman plague of 680 AD, *detail: angel and demon, fresco, c. 1476, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.

immediately abutting the entrance wall (Fig. 1.1), the painting depicts a posthumous miracle of St Sebastian, whose intervention was believed to have ended a pestilence ravaging Italy in 680 AD.[3] Most scholars agree in attributing the work to Antoniazzo Romano, favourite painter of pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484), who is portrayed as the pope leading the propitiatory procession. In all probability, the painting was commissioned by either Sixtus IV or his nephew Giuliano della Rovere, cardinal titular of the church from 1471–1503, in the aftermath of a plague outbreak in Rome during Sixtus' papacy, in 1476.[4]

The amicable cooperation of an angel and a demon in spreading the plague is described in Paul the Deacon's late eighth-century *History of the Lombards*, which, as we shall see, is most likely the fresco's direct inspiration.[5] Renaissance viewers would also have known the story from its thirteenth-century retelling by Dominican friar Jacobus de Voragine, in his popular hagiographic collection, the *Golden Legend*.[6] The particular circumstances associated with the Roman commission help explain why this unsettling combination of supernatural allies was faithfully represented. As we shall see, in other contexts,

3 For Sebastian as plague protector, see Louise Marshall, "Manipulating the Sacred: Image and Plague in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994): 488–500, 527–29; Louise Marshall, "Reading the Body of a Plague Saint: Narrative Altarpieces and Devotional Images of St. Sebastian in Renaissance Art," in *Reading Texts and Images: Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Art and Patronage*, (ed.) Bernard Muir (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2002), 237–60.

4 On this fresco, see Ernst Steinmann, "Ein Votivgemälde in S. Pietro in Vincoli zu Rom," *Kunstchronik* n.s. 14 (1902/03): 534–36; Raymond Crawfurd, *Plague and Pestilence in Literature and Art* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1914), 95–96; Guglielmo Matthiae, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, Le chiese di Roma illustrate, 54 (Rome: Edizioni Roma, 1960), 75; Anna Cavallaro, *Antoniazzo Romano e gli antoniazzeschi: una generazione di pittori nella Roma del Quattrocento* (Udine: Campanotto, 1992), 285, cat. 171; Gabriele Casti and Giuliana Zandri, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, Le chiese di Roma illustrate, n.s. 31 (Rome: Palombi, 1999), 155–57; Andreas Dehmer, "Nuova lettura di una dipinta votiva in San Pietro in Vincoli," *Bollettino d'Arte* 84/108 (1999): 71–76. The tomb of Florentine sculptors Piero (d. 1496) and Antonio Pollaiuolo (d. 1498), erected c. 1495–1505 and attributed to local sculptor Luigi Capponi, breaks into the lower border of the fresco: Matthiae, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 72–73.

5 For the text's popularity, and a cogent reevaluation of its aims and character, see Walter Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (AD 500–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 329–431.

6 Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda Aurea, vulgo Historia Lombardica dicta*, ch. XXIII/5, (ed.) Theodor Graesse, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Arnold, 1850), 113 [Internet Archive: http://archive.org/details/legendaaureavulgoojacouoft]; Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 1: 101.

where such considerations did not pertain, the strains of angelic-demonic cooperation become evident.

Paul's account opens with a series of ominous celestial portents (solar and lunar eclipses) announcing the forthcoming disaster.[7] In Rome, families were decimated, while in depopulated Pavia grass grew in the streets:

> And presently there followed a very severe pestilence for three months, that is, in July, August and September, and so great was the multitude of those dying that even parents with their children and brothers with their sisters were placed on biers two by two and conducted to their tombs at the city of Rome. And in like manner too this pestilence also depopulated Ticinum [Pavia], so that all citizens fled to the mountain ranges and to other places and grass and bushes grew in the market place and throughout the streets of the city.[8]

---

7 The full text, quoted sequentially below, is as follows: *His temporibus per indictionem octavam luna eclypsin passa est. Solis quoque eclypsis eodem pene tempore, hora diei quasi decima, quinto Nonas Maias effecta est. Moxque subsecuta gravissima pestis est tribus mensibus, hoc est Iulio, Augusto et Septembrio; tantaque fuit multitudo morientium, ut etiam parentes cum filiis atque fratres cum sororibus, bini per feretra positi, aput urbem Romam ad sepulchra ducerentur. Pari etiam modo haec pestilentia Ticinum quoque depopulata est, ita ut, cunctis civibus per iuga montium seu per diversa loca fugientibus, in foro et per plateas civitatis herbae et frutecta nascerentur. Tuncque visibiliter multis apparuit, quia bonus et malus angelus noctu per civitatem pergerent, et ex iussu boni angeli malus angelus, qui videbatur venabulum manu ferre, quotiens de venabulo hostium cuiuscumque domus percussisset, tot de eadem domo die sequenti homines interirent. Tunc cuidam per revelationem dictum est, quod pestis ipsa prius non quiesceret, quam in basilica beati Petri quae ad Vincula dicitur sancti Sebastiani martyris altarium poneretur. Factumque est, et delatis ab urbe Roma beati Sebastiani martyris reliquiis, mox in iam dicta basilica altarium constitutum est, pestis ipsa quievit.* Paul the Deacon, *Pauli Historia Langobardorum*, bk VI/5, (ed.) Georg Waitz, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores, 3: *Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saec. VI–IX*, 1 (Hannover: Impensis, 1878), 166 [http://www.dmgh.de/].

8 Paul the Deacon, *History of the Langobards*, bk VI/5, trans. William Dudley Foulke (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1907), 254–55. Paul's opening lines regarding the plague's terrible effects in the city of Rome follow the description in the *Liber Pontificalis*, under the entry for the reign of Pope Agathon (678–81 AD). See *Le Liber pontificalis*, LXXXI, (ed.) Louis Duchesne (Paris: De Boccard, 1955) [1868], 1: 350; *The Book of Pontiffs* (*Liber Pontificalis*). *The Ancient Biographies of the First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715*, trans. Raymond Davis, Translated Texts for Historians, 6, 2nd rev. ed. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 76. Goffart, *Narrators*, 381–82, 415–16, has persuasively argued for a better understanding of Paul's use of sources in the service of his overarching narrative design. In this instance, he suggests, the shared catastrophe of the plague linking the papal and Lombard capitals, and its ultimate resolution by means of the translation of Roman relics to Pavia, highlights the newly re-established good relations between the papacy and the Lombard kings.

It was at this point that the vision of the supernatural plague-spreaders appeared in the city. Working as a team, they spread death and destruction wherever they went:

> And then it visibly appeared to many that a good and a bad angel proceeded by night through the city and as many times as, upon command of the good angel, the bad angel, who appeared to carry a hunting spear in his hand, knocked at the door of each house with the spear, so many men perished from that house on the following day.[9]

However help was at hand. Divine revelation directed recourse to the Roman martyr Sebastian, a commander of the imperial guard who had suffered death for his faith not once but twice, first by arrows and then by beating:

> Then it was said to a certain man by revelation that the pestilence itself would not cease before an altar of St Sebastian the martyr was placed in the church of the blessed Peter which is called *ad Vincula*. And it was done, and after the remains of St Sebastian the martyr had been carried from the city of Rome, presently the altar was set up in the aforesaid church and the pestilence itself ceased.[10]

Both the *History of the Lombards* and the *Golden Legend* specify that the vision and the resultant dedication of an altar took place in Pavia. Peter's chains, preserved in the Roman church of S. Pietro in Vincoli, were greatly venerated during the medieval period, and churches with this dedication exist in a number of towns in Italy and further afield.[11] Nevertheless, by the late Quattrocento if not long before, the entire sequence of events was claimed for Rome.[12] This

---

9 Paul the Deacon, *History of the Langobards*, 255.

10 Ibid.

11 Henri Leclercq, "Chaines de Saint Pierre," *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, (eds.) Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1913), 3/1: 3–19; Casti and Zandri, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 33–40; Gabriele Casti and Maria Teresa Savini, "Il culto parallelo a S. Sebastiano nelle chiese di S. Pietro in Vincoli di Roma e di Pavia," *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia* 76 (2004): 347–63.

12 This transposition was evidently not confined to Rome. A Florentine fine-manner engraving of Sebastian surrounded by scenes of his life (c. 1460–70) includes the 680 epidemic, inscribed *QVESTA PI[S]TOLENZIA VENE ROMA*. See *The Illustrated Bartsch*, 24/2: *Early Italian Masters: Commentary*, 2, (ed.) Mark Zucker (New York: Abaris, 1994), 156–58, no. 2405.023; Louise Marshall, "Affected Bodies and Bodily Affect: Visualising Emotion in Renaissance Plague Images," in *Performing Emotions in the Medieval and Early Modern World*, (eds.) Joanne McEwan and Philippa Maddern, forthcoming.

FIGURE 1.4 *Antoniazzo Romano* (*attrib.*), The Roman plague of 680 AD, *detail: St Sebastian appears to a holy man and the holy man communicates his vision to the pope, fresco, c. 1476, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.

is demonstrated both by the fresco, which features a topographically accurate representation of Old St Peters in the upper area, complete with monumental staircase adorned with recently-commissioned statues of the apostles Peter and Paul (Fig. 1.4),[13] and by a fifteenth-century marble epigraph in praise of St Sebastian from the church.[14] As De Rossi perceptively noted over a century

13 Casti and Zandri, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 156; Charles Seymour, *Sculpture in Italy, 1400–1500*, The Pelican History of Art (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), 155, 244, n. 8.

14 The key critical reading of the epitaph remains Giovanni Battista De Rossi, *Musaici cristiani e saggi dei pavimenti delle chiese di Roma anteriori al secolo XV* (Roma: Libreria Spithover di Guglielmo Haas, 1899), three pages of unnumbered text following pl. XX, Musaico sull'altare di S. Sebastiano in S. Pietro in Vincoli. De Rossi was the first to critique prevailing assumptions that took the inscription at face value, including the transposition of the Pavian miracle to Rome, and presumed it was coincident with the events it narrated. See also Leclercq, "Chaines," 14–17; Casti and Zandri, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 207; Casti and Savini, "Il culto parallelo," 378–79, with a photograph at fig. 19. The epitaph is

ago, the text of the epigraph follows that of Paul the Deacon almost exactly. At the same time, Paul's references to Pavia are deliberately suppressed and the language reworked in more elaborate Quattrocento humanist vein:

> To St. Sebastian, martyr, dispeller of pestilence. In the year of salvation 680, a pernicious and severe plague invaded the city of Rome. The evil lasted for the three months of July, August and September. Moreover, so great was the number of those who perished, that parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters and cousins were borne on the same bier to the places of burial, which, everywhere filled with bodies, hardly sufficed. In addition to this, nocturnal miracles alarmed them; for two angels, one good and the other opposing, went through the city; and this last bearing a hunting spear in his hand, as many times as he struck the doors, so many fell dead in those houses. The misfortune spread for a length of time, until it was announced to a certain holy man that there would be an end of the calamity, if, in the church of St. Peter ad Vincula, an altar should be consecrated to Sebastian the martyr; which thing being done immediately, the pestilence, as if driven back by hand, was commanded to cease.[15]

Notably, both fresco and epigraph transform Paul's anonymous recipient of divine revelation ("a certain man") into a more worthy candidate. Described as

---

now placed to the right of the (transposed) Sebastian altar, which was moved to the left aisle wall in 1683 (cf below, n. 18).

15 *S*[*AN*]. *SEBASTIANO. MARTYRI. DEPVLSORI. PESTILITATIS/ AN*[*NO*]. *SAL*[*UTIS*]. *DC. LXXX. VRB*[*EM*] *ROMAM. PERNITIOSA ET GRAVIS INVASIT PESTIS/ TRIMESTRE M*[*A*]*LVM FVIT. IVLIO. AVG*[*USTO*] *Q*[*UE*]*: ET. SEPT*[*EMBRIO*]. *TANTA ADCESSIT MVLTITVDO/ PEREVNTIVM. VT. EOD*[*EM*]. *FERETRO. PARENTES CVM LIB*[*ERIS*]. *VIRI CVM VXORIB*[*US*]*./ FRATRES CVM FRATR*[*IBUS*] *ET SORORIB*[*US*]. *EFFERRENTVR LOCA VNDIQ*[*UE*] *REPLETA CADAVERIB*[*US*]*./ VIX SVPPETEBANT. AD. HAEC. NOCTVRNA MIRACVLA TERRVERANT. NAM. DVO/ ANGELI BONVS ALTER CONTRA ALTER VRB*[*EM*]. *PERAGRABANT. ET. HIC. VENABVL*[*UM*]*./ MANV FERENS QVOT PVLSIB*[*US*]. *OSTIA TETIGISSET TOTID*[*EM*]. *IN ILLIS DOMIB*[*US*]*./ CADEBANT MORTALES TAM DIV LABES VAGATA DONICVM CVID*[*AM*]. *S*[*ANCTO*]. *VIRO/ NVNTIATVM FERVNT FINEM CALAMITATIS FORE SI IN AEDE. S*[*AN*]. *PETRI AD/ VINCVLA ALTARE SEBASTIANO MARTYRI CONSECRARETVR RE PERFECTA ILLICO/ PESTIS VELVT MANV PVLSA/ FA CESSERE IVSSA EST.* My transcription from the original; transcribed in expanded, non-epigraphic form, with some variants here corrected, in Leclercq, "Chaines," 14. English translation, slightly modified in light of the original, by Anna Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art* [1896] (New York: AMS, 1970), 2: 415.

"a certain holy man" in the inscription, he is depicted in the fresco as a saintly hermit, seen no less than three times in the upper right (Fig. 1.4), receiving the vision in his wilderness retreat, trekking through the landscape to discharge his mission, and kneeling before the Pope to communicate the heavenly message. Epigraphy and language do not date the marble inscription more specifically than the Quattrocento, when it was first recorded in 1494, so it is difficult to determine if it was created earlier, at the same time or later than the painting.[16] Nevertheless the parallels are suggestive, and it seems probable that both were part of the same ongoing intensive campaign of renovation of the church sponsored by Sixtus IV, previously cardinal titular, and his nephew Giuliano, current incumbent.[17]

Fresco and inscription were placed in close proximity to an altar which, as the marble epigraph indicates, was identified as the altar mentioned by Paul, erected to Sebastian during the 680 plague. In the fifteenth century, this altar was located on the back wall of the church, to the left of the entering visitor (in an area now pierced by a later window, Fig. 1.1).[18] Belief in its antiquity and miraculous origins was enhanced by the presence of an unusual Early Christian mosaic icon of the saint, identified by gold letters and shown standing in paradise holding the crown of eternal life (Fig. 1.5).[19] The original presence

16 By humanist Pietro Sabino in his manuscript collection of pagan and Christian epigraphs, presented around 1494/95 to King Charles VIII of France (De Rossi). On Sabino, see Daniele Gionta, *Epigrafia umanistica a Roma* (Messina: Centro Interdipartimentale di Studi Umanistici, 2005), 107–59.

17 For the Della Rovere renovations, see Matthiae, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 25–27; Casti and Zandri, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 105–23; Alessandro Ippoliti, *Il complesso di San Pietro in Vincoli e la committenza della Rovere* (*1467–1520*) (Rome: Archivio Guido Izzi, 1999).

18 Sixteenth-century sources record the altar's original position on the entrance wall, to the left of the main portal, although not the exact relationship of the various elements of mosaic icon, altar and associated later (possibly thirteenth-century?) frescoes (including a Madonna and Child, another fresco of Sebastian, and perhaps a figure of Christ). The altar was renovated in 1576, when Pope Gregory XIII conceded an indulgence for souls in purgatory; a century later, in 1683, it was moved to its present site in the left aisle. See De Rossi, *Musaici*; Casti and Zandri, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 206–9; Casti and Savini, "Il culto paralello," 369–79.

19 Leclercq, "Chaines," 13–18; Matthiae, *San Pietro in Vincoli*, 68; idem, *Mosaici medioevali delle chiese di Roma* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1967), 1: 199–201; Walter Oakeshott, *The Mosaics of Rome* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), 154–55; Casti and Savini, "Il culto parallelo," 364–91. On the creation and function of icons such as this in the seventh and eighth centuries, see the classic analyses of Ernst Kitzinger, "Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm," in his *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West: Selected Studies*, (ed.) Walter Kleinbauer (Bloomington: Indiana University

FIGURE 1.5 St Sebastian, *mosaic icon, 7th or 8th century, Rome, S. Pietro in Vincoli.*
PHOTO: AUTHOR.

of this altar explains the siting of the fifteenth-century fresco, painted immediately adjacent, on the first pillar of the left-hand nave arcade. The two were thus intended to be read together. A visual exposition of the altar's miraculous origins, the fresco offers both warning and consolation. The pestilence is shown to have been visited upon sinful humanity by a specially assembled supernatural task force. Quattrocento beholders were all too familiar with plague's devastation, and the epidemic's deadly effects are depicted with relish. Yet viewers are also assured that heavenly protection is available for appropriately penitent supplicants.

Kindred Spirits

Paul's terminology of the good and bad angels (repeated by Jacobus and, with slight variation, by the Quattrocento epigraph) emphasises the pair's common origins: though now estranged, they remain close kin.[20] As fallen angels, demons are cast down from their former heavenly abode and forever alienated from God, but even in their debased state, they retain their angelic attributes.[21] Good or bad, both are alike bodiless spirits, creatures of air, endowed with extraordinary powers over created matter. The pair differ not in nature but in will. Tasked with a common assignment, these representatives of evil and good nevertheless somehow manage to agree sufficiently to work together.

Significantly, their relationship was described in hierarchical terms: the angel was the brains in charge of the operation and the demon was the muscle, the hired assassin. The angel identified victims and the devil killed them. The angel chose the houses to be attacked. When so ordered, the demon would strike the door of a house with his spear. According to Paul, the demon's spear was both death knell and weapon of mass destruction, with the number of blows corresponding to the number of dead the following day. In Jacobus' more summary retelling, the attack was all encompassing, with a single strike sufficient to kill everyone inside: "When the good angel gave the command, the

---

Press, 1976), 157–232 [1958]; and Ernst Kitzinger, "On Some Icons of the Seventh Century," ibid., 233–55 [1955].

20 "bonus et malus angelus" (Paul the Deacon, *Istoria Langobardorum*, 166); "bonus angelus . . . malo angelo sequenti . . ." (Jacobus, *Legenda Aurea*, 113); "duo angeli bonus alter contra alter . . ." (epigraph).

21 Russell, *Lucifer*, 29–35, 172–81; David Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 16–27.

bad one struck and killed, and when he struck a house, all the people in it were carried out dead."[22]

Parity and hierarchy are both effectively visualised in the Roman fresco (Fig. 1.3). While the opposing natures of angel and demon are conveyed by their contrasting appearances, following long established visual conventions, these are also modified to suggest a certain level of almost comradely co-existence.[23] Inevitably, the angel is young and beautiful, with long golden hair, his holiness visibly marked by his halo. Clad in white and gold garments, he passes through the city with a light tread. His tunic caught at the waist in an elegant curlicue, he stands poised and graceful before the doomed residence. Equally conventionally, the devil is naked, signalling his degraded and shameless condition. His dark colouration aligns him with the forces of darkness and evil. A suggestion of rough, inhuman skin, possibly accentuated by scales on the chest, further sets him apart as a monstrous and frightening other, as do the horns on his head.

And yet these sinister signs are comparatively muted. Overall, this demon is much less bestial or monstrous than is customary in Renaissance art. Indeed, many traditional demonic attributes seem deliberately avoided. Standing side by side, angel and devil are almost the same size. Both are shown with large feathered wings, a standard angelic attribute here distributed to the demon as well, instead of the more usual webbed bat wings more suitable to the caverns of hell (although the evil one's are dark instead of white). Above all, this demon is more or less human-seeming, with the usual complement of arms and legs and a human face. This distinguishes him from almost all other Renaissance devils, usually covered in fur or scales, with the faces of beasts or monsters,

22 Jacobus, *Golden Legend*, 1: 101.

23 For demonic iconography, see Emile Mâle, *Religious Art in France: The Twelfth Century. A Study of the Origins of Medieval Iconography*, (ed.) Harry Bober (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 367–72; Russell, *Lucifer*, 129–33, 209–12; Joan Gregg, *Devils, Women and Jews: Reflections of the Other in Medieval Sermon Stories* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 23–82; Barbara Palmer, "The Inhabitants of Hell: Devils," in *The Iconography of Hell*, (eds.) Clifford Davidson and Thomas Seiler (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1992), 20–40; Jérôme Baschet, *Les justices de l'au-delà. Les représentations de l'enfer en France et en Italie* (*XII^e–XV^e siècle*), Bibliothèque des Ecoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 279 (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1993); Luther Link, *The Devil: A Mask Without a Face* (London: Reaktion, 1995), 35–80; Debra Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 61–94; Charles Zika, "Demons, Demonology, X: Visual Arts" and Charles Zika, "Devil, VI: Visual Arts," in *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming).

endowed with claws, talons, tails, snouts, fangs, and other animalistic or fantastic appendages. Instead, working alongside his elegant colleague, the demon possesses a certain air of dignity and resolution; intent on his murderous task, his face is calm and composed.

This air of severe nobility may derive from Etruscan images of the demon Charu or Charun (his name likely derived from the Greek ferryman of the dead but his nature and functions quite distinct), psychopomp, harbinger and attendant of death, guardian of the doors of the underworld (Fig. 1.6).[24] The details are certainly suggestive: like this Roman demon, Charu was human in appearance, green, grey or blue-skinned, often winged, and endowed with a characteristic hooked nose, pointed ears and goatee beard, all of which reappear here. Although the weapons are not the same—Charu wields a hammer rather than a spear, which he usually carries over his shoulder but sometimes uses to menace the dead or ward off monsters—both come armed and dangerous. Moreover, the Etruscan demon was often shown standing beside the closed doors of the underworld with his hammer over his shoulder and his head turned in profile, very much in the pose and position of the Roman demon, with spear lifted to batter at the palace door. Etruscan art was known and appreciated in Renaissance Italy, and Charu was one of the most common figures in funerary art, appearing in tomb paintings, vases and sarcophagi as well as stone and bronze statuettes and terracotta masks.[25] Perhaps, then, the task of representing a demon capable of working in concert with an angel suggested the need for a more humanised figure than was currently available and prompted a search for an alternative model. In such a situation, the Etruscan demon was an apposite match: a fearsome creature from the pagan past, he could be readily recast as an evil angel primed for assassination.

---

24 Nancy de Grummond, *Etruscan Myth, Sacred History and Legend* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Museum, 2006), 213–20; Ingrid Krauskopf, "The Grave and Beyond," in *The Religion of the Etruscans*, (eds.) Nancy de Grummond and Erika Simon (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 66–89; Stephan Steingräber, *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting* (Los Angeles: Getty, 2006), 192–95.

25 De Grummond, *Etruscan Myth*, 214, characterises Charu as "arguably the most popular Etruscan mythological figure of all." For Renaissance knowledge of Etruscan art, see André Chastel, "L'*Etruscan Revival* du XV^{e} siècle," *Revue de l'Art* 1 (1959): 165–80; John R. Spencer, "Volterra, 1466," *Art Bulletin* 48 (1966): 95–96; Nancy de Grummond, "Rediscovery," in *Etruscan Life and Afterlife: A Handbook of Etruscan Studies*, (ed.) Larissa Bonfante (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986), 18–46; Steven Bule, "Etruscan Echoes in Italian Renaissance Art," in *Etruscan Italy: Etruscan Influences on the Civilizations of Italy from Antiquity to the Modern Era*, (ed.) John Hall (Provo: Brigham Young University and Museum of Art, 1996), 307–37.

FIGURE 1.6 Charu and Vanth, *wall painting, 3rd century BC, Tarquinia, Tomb of the Anina family.*
PHOTO: DEA PICTURE LIBRARY/ART RESOURCE, NEW YORK.

The demon's obedient concentration on the work at hand indicates that he is subservient to his companion. Despite his mild appearance, the angel is definitely in charge of the hit squad, leading the way and gesturing commandingly towards the palace door. The visual exclamation point of a tree immediately behind draws the eye unerringly to him at the centre of the picture and to his death-dealing gesture. He is the fulcrum around which the whole painting revolves, the source of the surrounding devastation. The tree's assertive verticality and flourishing vitality, which echoes the colour of the demon's skin, could be read as a melancholy counterpoint to the prostate corpses lying on the nearby steps and streets.

Such greenery in the heart of the city (another tree or bush emerges from behind the buildings on the right) exemplifies the desolation brought about by the epidemic, the city left untended through so many deaths that it reverts to wilderness. This corresponds very closely to Paul the Deacon's description of plague-ravaged Pavia, where "grass and bushes grew in the market place and throughout the streets of the city." The visual prominence of the foliage suggests the reference is deliberate; the fact that this detail was not included in the paraphrasing of the fifteenth-century epigraph indicates that the latter is most likely not the painting's direct source, but is rather a parallel manifestation of the desire to honour the saint for his assistance in halting the plague.[26]

Divine Subcontractors

Since angels are by their very nature extensions of the divine will, the presence of the angel as director of the pair indicates that the epidemic originates in God. From the Old Testament, Christianity inherited the explanation of plague as punishment for sin, sent by an offended deity.[27] Yet no matter how terrible, such punishments were also recognised as mercifully intended: like a stern parent, God chastises his errant people to correct their excesses and call them to repentance. So a Paduan chronicler, writing in the aftermath of the Black Death, observed that "Almighty God, who does not desire the death of a sinner, but that he may be converted and live, first threatens and secondly strikes to reform the human race, not to destroy it."[28] Nevertheless, God does not appear in the Roman fresco, not even in the heavenly revelation explaining how the plague may be ended. This is delivered by Sebastian himself, shown with the features of the white-haired figure of the adjoining mosaic icon (Figs. 1.4 and 1.5).[29] Divine absence could be read as an indictment of the state of

26 The detail is also absent from the *Golden Legend*.

27 Louise Marshall, "Religion and Epidemic Disease," in *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics and Plagues*, (ed.) Joseph Byrne (Westport: Greenwood, 2008), 2: 593–600.

28 Writing before 1364, the author takes comfort from God's statement of his intentions in Ez. 33:11, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked may turn from his way and live." Translated by Rosemary Horrox, *The Black Death* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 34.

29 The identity of the figure appearing to the hermit has not been discussed by other scholars. However, the presence of a lone angel (rather than a host), and details of hair (short, with tight white curls), beard (short) and clothing (a cloak fastened by a brooch on the right shoulder) differentiate him from God the Father and explicitly reference the mosaic of Sebastian.

humanity. As if human sin has become too offensive to gaze upon any further, God withdraws from the world entirely, subcontracting the unpleasant job of punishing sinners to his supernatural minions.

In this situation, the angel acts as God's deputy, directing the joint task force and ensuring its smooth operation. His supervisory role indicates that the plague deaths are divinely intended: those killed are not felled randomly, but are chosen by God, acting through his angelic agent. Belief in plague as punishment for sin meant that victims could be seen as sinners receiving their just reward. At the same time, the plague inflicted upon Israel by God as punishment for King David's sin of levying a census (2 Sam. 24; 1 Chron. 21) established the principle of collective guilt, when the innocent die alongside (or even instead of) the guilty. To explain such a situation, Christian consolatory literature had long emphasised the differing fates of the just and the damned; for those called early to heaven, plague was no punishment but a reward to be welcomed.[30]

The angel's involvement in the killing process also ensured that the deaths were inevitable. Powerful supernatural beings, incorporeal creatures of wind and air, angels are formidable opponents against whom humanity has no defence. As Jacobus de Voragine reminded his readers, angels such as Michael were sent by God "when something requiring wondrous powers is to be done . . . they are strong and ready to carry out God's will, and they are to be found promptly wherever the divine nod commands."[31] Hence their capacity to turn licensed killer, as when God sent an angel so fell in intent he was known only as "the destroyer" or "the avenger" (traditionally identified as Michael, angelic war-leader) to kill every first-born child of the Egyptians (Exodus 12:23).[32] The Davidic plague was also the work of "the angel of the Lord"; only the prospect of laying waste the sacred city of Jerusalem caused God sufficient compunction to rescind his orders and direct the angel to desist.[33] In such instances, as in the Roman fresco, the deity refrains from direct action, delegating his active potency to an angelic assistant. However, as God's intervention in the Davidic plague shows, angels do not operate independently but solely at the divine command, ready to cease on the instant when he so decrees. Even when he refrains from direct action, God remains on watch, an unseen but never derelict supervisor.

30 Marshall, "Religion and Epidemic Disease," 597.

31 Jacobus, *Golden Legend*, 2: 201; 1: 296.

32 Ibid., 2: 201, 206.

33 Keck, *Angels*, 38–39, 194, 206, briefly discusses angels' punitive capacity.

Demons and the Plague

Identification of demons as causative agents of the plague, found in a number of Renaissance plague pictures,[34] is not surprising, given their well known hatred of humanity and delight in torment, torture and all manner of destruction.[35] Ever since they rebelled against God and were routed by Michael and the loyal angels, the devil and his minions have zealously dedicated themselves to the temptation and persecution of humankind, fuelled by hatred of good, as well as anger and envy at the prospect of humanity's elevation to repopulate the paradisal vacancies created by their own prideful defection. Above all, demonic plague-spreaders reminded viewers of the disease's origins in human sin.

As theologians and preachers insisted, Lucifer and his hosts had no power to force the soul to sin. Yet at the same time, they possessed astonishing powers over the human body and the created world. Masters of illusion, trickery and deceit, they could change shape, fly through the air, take up residence in the body and subject even the most holy of saints to terrible physical abuse. They delighted in harrying humanity and were quick to transform from persuasive tempter to zealous agent of affliction. Vice, sin and punishment were their elements. Lucifer is the prince of the world, theologians taught, not because of any power over matter, but because he is lord of sinful human beings. By their sins, men and women give themselves over to him, becoming Satan's servants

34 See Joseph Polzer, "Aspects of the Fourteenth-Century Iconography of Death and the Plague," in *The Black Death: The Impact of the Fourteenth Century Plague*, (ed.) Daniel Williman (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), 115; Marshall, "Manipulating the Sacred," 512–16; Louise Marshall, "La costruzione di un santo contro la peste: il caso di Nicola da Tolentino," in *San Nicola da Tolentino nell'arte: Corpus iconografico*, 1: *Dalle origini al Concilio di Trento*, (eds.) Valentino Pace and Roberto Tollo (Milan: Motta, 2005), 103–13.

35 Of the large literature on Christian beliefs regarding demons and the Devil, I have found the following most useful: Russell, *Lucifer*; Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (New York: New American Library, 1975); Joan O'Grady, *The Prince of Darkness: The Devil in History, Religion and the Human Psyche* (London: Element, 1989); Link, *Devil*; Gregg, *Devils*; Walter Stephens, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Robert Muchembled, *A History of the Devil, from the Middle Ages to the Present* (London: Polity Press, 2003); Zika, "Putting the Devil Back," 61–78; Charles Zika, "Demons, Demonology, VI: Christianity," *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming).

and children, members of his infernal body. As the Devil once proudly boasted to a knight, there was no evil done in the world of which he was not aware.[36]

Yet even devils operate within the framework of divine omnipotence, a message very clearly conveyed in the Roman fresco by the way in which the demon obeys the angelic commands. Like everything in the cosmos, Satan and his followers are created by God and subject to his authority. Their activities are possible solely through divine tolerance. The Devil is always under the all-seeing eye of the creator and nothing he does is hidden from God.[37] Moreover, omniscient God turns even the evil of devils to good effect, permitting them to tempt and assail the just to strengthen their faith by adversity. As Gregory the Great affirmed, "One should realise that Satan's will is always evil, but his power is never unjust, for his will is his own but his power comes from God. Whatever he seeks to do for the sake of injustice, God seeks to do for the sake of justice alone."[38] Demons are thus enlisted in the divine plan despite themselves; while they wish always to attack and harm humanity, God uses their perverted nature and evil desires to carry out his own designs. So Job suffers a seemingly-endless cycle of disasters, and the same reading of divinely-endorsed diabolic afflictions as test of faith was often applied to outbreaks of disease and other catastrophes.[39] As St Francis of Assisi wryly recognised after suffering a beating at their hands, "the demons are the Lord's bailiffs, whom he sends to punish excesses."[40]

Nevertheless, however much preachers and theologians might reassure worshippers of the Devil's circumscribed remit, the extraordinary devastation of the plague could suggest a different message, in which the magnitude of human sin had allowed demons to triumph as never before. Zika and others have traced Western Europe's escalating preoccupation with demonic aggression and violence, their powers and efficacy as active agents intervening in human lives, in the homiletic literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. As he has suggested, the greater ubiquity and humanisation of devils functions as the inverse pole of the increasing emphasis on the humanity and

36 Russell, *Lucifer*, 98–102, 206. For the story of the Devil and the sceptical knight, ibid., 89–90; Gregg, *Devils*, 63–64, tale D15.

37 Russell, *Lucifer*, 36–37, 98–99, 158, 168, 196–97.

38 Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, cited in Russell, *Lucifer*, 101. For similar statements by Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas, ibid., 180–81, 196–97, 205–6.

39 Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, 66 (citing Tertullian and Origen); Russell, *Lucifer*, 158.

40 Jacobus, *Golden Legend*, 2: 223.

approachability of Christ, his mother and the saints.[41] The advent of plague could be understood as an even more fearsome indication of demonic dominion over sinful humanity, a constantly repeating orgy of divinely-sanctioned destruction.

Diabolic involvement in spreading the plague thus remained profoundly disturbing for Renaissance viewers, a clear barometer of divine fury and measure of the enormity of human sin. Such fears can be heard in the treatise written by Piacenza lawyer Gabriele de' Muissis soon after the Black Death, where God furiously anathematises the heedless and sinful world and literally consigns it to the devil: "The sight of the vanities and lecheries to which you have abandoned yourself have provoked me to fury. May evil spirits arise with the power to devour you." The near-infinite number of demons in the atmosphere guaranteed that there would be no escape: "Cities, fortresses, fields, woods, highways and rivers are ringed by thieves—which is to say by evil spirits, the executioners of the supreme Judge, preparing endless punishments for us all."[42]

Uneasy Allies

What distinguishes the Roman fresco from virtually every other representation of an epidemic, textual or visual, is the way the angel makes use of a deputy and chooses to work with a demon. The pairing is of course dictated by Paul's text, but the representation of their allied operation remains virtually unique. To my knowledge, there is nothing quite like this in any other hagiographic narrative or sermon story, where angels and devils remained firmly polarised across strictly demarcated battle lines.[43] The idea of angels and demons conducting a joint punitive expedition remains highly unusual, almost shocking. Yet however incredible it may seem, the logic of plague leads directly to exactly such a conclusion. Though their motives differ, angels and demons are both God's

41 Zika, "Putting the Devil Back," 63; Russell, *Lucifer*, 62–91, 129–58, 208–73; Barbara Rosenwein, "Even the Devil (Sometimes) has Feelings: Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages," *The Haskins Society Journal* 14 (2003): 1–14.

42 Horrox, *Black Death*, 15, 21.

43 Aaron Gurevich has discussed the disruption of normal expectations of demonic behaviour found in *exempla* featuring demons who preach, live in monasteries, bow to the host or otherwise reinforce Christian morality. However their actions are always motivated by evil, as when a demon preaches Christian truths so that those who hear and ignore the message will be more securely damned. See Aaron Gurevich, "Santi iracondi e demoni buoni negli *exempla*," in *Santi e demoni nell'alto medioevo occidentale* (*secoli V–XI*) (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1989), 1045–63. None of these *exempla* include any instances of devils and angels working together.

servants, consciously or unconsciously: the devil because he wishes to harm, the angel because he knows and wholeheartedly consents to the divine intentions. In heaven as much as on earth, uneasy alliances of former foes can occur when they share common goals, irrespective of their opposing ideologies.

This sense of reluctant allies, conjoined by necessity, characterises the only other Italian example of a combined angelic and demonic strike force known to me, a miniature by Lombard illuminator Belbello da Pavia from the famous *Visconti Hours*, completed for Milanese Duke Filippo Maria in the first decades of the fifteenth century (Fig. 1.7).[44] In a unique and hitherto unnoticed transposition from hagiographic to biblical narrative, Paul's good and bad angels are redeployed to represent the plague of the Egyptians. The pair stand side by side at the centre of a symmetrical construction that counterposes the safety of the Tau-marked Israelite house on the left with the terrible fate of the Egyptians in the opposite, unmarked dwelling. This time the demon is more conventionally bestial, covered in fur and endowed with bat wings, tail and wickedly taloned feet. Yet perhaps for the same need to represent a feasible working alliance as was suggested for the Roman fresco, here too his face is more human than most, with a patriarchal beard to set off the horns on his head. Angel and devil share a long look, as if to underline their extraordinary moment of complicity. The angel gestures, the demon strikes, and within the Egyptian house, disaster unfolds, as a family mourns their dead child.

The bipartite composition and polarised alignment of the two supernatural agents, marked along the central axis by the snow-covered dead tree behind, with the Israelites and the angel at the left and the demon and the Egyptians at the right, visually prompts the viewer with memories of the Last Judgement

44 Millard Meiss and Edith W. Kirsch, *The Visconti Hours: National Library, Florence* (New York: Braziller, 1972). Belbello's work on the second half of the manuscript must have been commissioned after Filippo Maria's accession in 1412, perhaps in the 1420s (ibid., 26–28). Not inappropriately, the miniature is one of several illustrating the second Nocturn of the Office of the Dead. However, as Meiss points out (ibid., 24–25), the unusual decision to illustrate the texts of the Hours with a continuous Old Testament narrative means that there is in most instances no direct relationship between text and accompanying miniature; rather, the entire book unfolds the history of human salvation in interleaving pictorial cycles of the old and new dispensations. The density of the Old Testament sequence (from Genesis through to Kings) is for Meiss an indication that the illuminators must have been working from a historiated bible as model, but if that is so, the presence of the devil in this scene remains extraordinarily unusual, as briefly noted by Kirsch (without further expansion) in her commentary. The miniature is also reproduced in Link, *Devil*, col. pl. 36, although he does not comment on the subject beyond suggesting (not to my mind entirely plausibly) that the demon's appearance is derived from costumed figures in mystery plays (71).

FIGURE 1.7 *Belbello da Pavia,* The Visconti Hours*, 1420s, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Ms. Landau Finaly 22, f. 95r: God sends the plague on the first-born Egyptian children.*
PHOTO: SU CONCESSIONE DEL MINISTERO DEI BENI E DELLE ATTIVITÀ CULTURALI E DEL TURISMO, BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE CENTRALE DI FIRENZE.

and the contrasting fates of the saved and damned, which the Egyptian plague was believed to prefigure. As the thirteenth-century Bible Moralisée explained, "That the angel passed over those marked and killed those not marked signifies that the angel will pass over the good on Judgement Day and will cut up the miscreants and the heretics and will push them into hell."[45]

Such references subtly but tellingly fracture the pair's seemingly united front. Understood from the perspective of the presiding deity of the final days, the fiend is consigned to the sinister side, carrying out his allotted task of punishing the damned. Hopeful of his own place amongst the just, the ducal viewer could identify with the escaping Israelites protected by the angel, who stands between them and the demon. At the same time, these reassurances might also be tempered by awareness of present and future dangers. As successive epidemics had shown, the enormity of human sin could just as easily provoke an offended God into dispatching this same lethal team against his own people.

Yet it appears that for many, it was a step too far to think of two such fundamentally oppositional beings colluding to humanity's detriment. Thus, although the 680 plague was several times represented, no other Italian depiction follows the literary sources in representing evil and good angel working together. Instead, most cycles of Sebastian's life avoid the issue, either by omitting the miracle entirely or by focusing solely on a depiction of the plague-wracked city. However, it is a measure of the shock and resistance that this narrative could provoke that one of the earliest representations of the 680 plague, painted for Florence cathedral by Giovanni del Biondo in the 1370s (Fig. 1.8), shows demon and angel firmly ranked on opposing sides.[46] Now almost invisible save for his halo and surrounding incised rays, the angel responds to Sebastian's prayers by driving away his former accomplice. Previous alliances are null and void and the dichotomous world of good and evil has slid solidly back into place: devils are put to rout and angels are welcome purveyors of divine deliverance. Detached from his co-conspirator, the demon could take

45 *Bible Moralisée, Vienna, Codex Vindobonensis 2554, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*, (ed.) and trans. Gerald Guest (London: Harvey Miller, 1995), 75.

46 Richard Offner and Klara Steinweg, *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, IV/4, *Giovanni del Biondo, I* (New York: New York University, 1967), 129–33; Diana Norman, "Change and Continuity: Art and Religion After the Black Death," in *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art, Society, and Religion 1280–1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 1: 190–95; Marshall, "Reading the Body of a Plague Saint," 244–46, 256; Louise Bourdua, "The Arts in Florence After the Black Death," in *Florence*, (ed.) Francis Ames-Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 82–84.

FIGURE 1.8 *Giovanni del Biondo, St Sebastian Altarpiece, 1370s, Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, detail*: St Sebastian stays the plague of 680 AD.
PHOTO: AUTHOR.

the full brunt of devotees' fear and hatred, scratched and scarred over the years as worshippers would have him attacked and expelled by angelic might.

The deliberate reworking of the sources seen in the Florentine altarpiece highlights the extent to which the alliance of angel and devil remained an unprecedented occurrence, challenging and disrupting contemporary expectations of the normal functioning of the cosmos. Their pairing was fraught with dread precisely because it demonstrated so starkly the implacability of divine anger. Demonic and angelic collaboration turned the world upside down and forced viewers to confront unwelcome truths about the enormity of their sins and the extreme measures God was willing to sanction in order to ensure that humanity was justly punished.

Protective Strategies

The Roman fresco's near-unique fidelity to the original text is explained by the distinctive circumstances of its site. Placed next to what was believed to be the altar to Sebastian, erection of which halted the 680 plague, the painting pays homage to the saint and celebrates the church's possession of this ancient and efficacious foundation (Figs. 1.1 and 1.2). Insistence on the extraordinary events that led to the altar's creation redounded to the greater credit of its sheltering church. Representation of the unprecedented angelic-demonic alliance that caused the plague also exalts the even greater heavenly powers enlisted to defeat them. If the vision of the joint strike force was perturbing, the means to circumvent their sinister activities lay close at hand, at the altar nearby.

The move from disaster to deliverance is embedded in the painting's pictorial structure. Standing in the nave, the viewer is almost physically overwhelmed by the bodies heaped like piles of refuse in the right foreground.[47] Carefully orchestrated details solicit an emotional response. The body of a young man juts out, as if about to tumble forward into the actual space. Picked out in eye-catching white, the corpse of a woman with a baby at her breast is a pathetic motif deliberately designed to tug at the heart-strings. Most shocking of all, the grisly pile climaxes in a naked male body, a dramatic departure from the standard iconography of the Triumph of Death, whose victims were invariably clothed. Stripped of all markers of social identity, the arm covering his face obliterating any sense of personal individuality, his genitalia shamefully exposed to public gaze, the anonymous man is reduced to the originary condition of fallen humanity. By its emphasis on shame and sinfulness, his naked corpse reminds the beholder of plague's ultimate origins in divine anger at human sin.

From the harrowing spectacle of the abandoned dead, visualising contemporaries' worst nightmares of familial abandonment and dishonourable burial during times of plague, the eye follows the invitation of the open street to encounter the chilling spectacle of angelic-demonic cooperation at the fresco's heart. The angel is the linch-pin for the entire composition, generating the heaped corpses in the foreground but also drawing the eye along the vertical axis of the tree and up the steps to the hermit kneeling in petition before the pope. Averting their eyes from the melancholy spectacle of yet another plague corpse, ushered forward by the guardian figures of the two princes of the apostles, the beholder is invited to join the hermit on his knees before the pope.

47 For a more detailed analysis, see Marshall, "Affected Bodies."

Not accidentally, all inward and upward motion culminates in the figure of the enthroned pontiff, the apogee of the composition, God's appointed vicar on earth, the earthly facilitator by whose decree the relics are transferred, the altar erected and the pestilence stayed. On the dome above, the statue of Michael sheathing his sword recalls a famous earlier instance when another Roman plague was similarly routed by papal intervention, promising an equally felicitous resolution to the current request. In 590 AD, Pope Gregory the Great organised processions to petition divine mercy, and the archangel appeared above the papal fortress sheathing a bloody sword as a sign that God's anger had been appeased and the plague was lifted.[48] The building was renamed Castel Sant'Angelo and a statue of the angel erected at its summit, here transposed to St Peter's and placed at the painting's very apex.

Reference to the Gregorian plague continues in the lower left. The blessing hand of the enthroned pope sets in motion the celestially-engineered countermove to block the seemingly unstoppable supernatural pair at the painting's core. The same gesture launches the procession which emerges like a tidal wave at the left, sweeping down the steps, through the streets and into the space of the church itself. Led by pope Sixtus, surrounded by his cardinals and a massed phalanx of bishops, the procession joins past and present to celebrate papal leadership at a moment of crisis. As Gregory the Great, Sixtus heads the procession carrying a venerable image of the Madonna, whose presence banished the poisoned air, to the sound of angelic voices singing her praises. Gregory's inspired completion of the familiar antiphon with a petition to the Virgin for protection (*Ora pro nobis, Deum rogamus, alleluia*) is perhaps visualised in the detail of the kneeling cleric in the foreground, holding open a liturgical book before the pontiff, his feet illusionistically projecting over the painted edge. This was the moment when Michael appeared to signal the end of the plague. Although the painted pope continues to move forward, the statue of the angel above St Peter's stretches across time and pictorial space to offer the same reassurance.

Past and present fold into each other. Reenacting Gregory's procession, the flood of participants also invokes the penitential procession authorised by Sixtus IV in 1476 (although not personally led by him, as he had already left Rome for healthier air, as recorded by diarist Stefano Infessura, and did not return until several months later).[49] As Andreas Dehmer has pointed out,

48 Jacobus, *Golden Legend*, 1: 173–74. For Renaissance representations of this miracle, see Henri Mollaret and Jacqueline Brossollet, "La procession de saint Grégoire et la peste à Rome en l'an 590," *Médecine de France* 57 (1969): 13–22.

49 *Del 1476 al dì 10 di iugnio lo papa Sixto se partì de Roma per lo ario infetto, e andossene in Campagnano, et lasciò in Roma per legato lo cardinale de Melfita . . . lo quale papa tornò*

the venerable icon of S. Maria Maggiore, believed to have been painted by the evangelist Luke and carried on both occasions, is here substituted with a more modern and plague-appropriate image of a canvas banner of the Virgin of Mercy, standing with arms outstretched to welcome all of Christendom beneath the shelter of her protective mantle.[50]

The procession flows down past the deadly pair of angel and demon, and the two lower halves of the fresco balance each other like the opened pages of the book held up by the cleric, hinged around the centre. Inevitable, inexorable death on the right is purged and swept aside on the left. And once more the specificities of site are woven into the picture. Against the characteristic movement of the eye from left to right, with all the potential for culmination and triumphant destinations on the right-ward side, the emphatic movement of the lower area is to the left. The reason for this deliberate disavowal of conventional compositional strategies is the presence of the Sebastian altar on the adjoining wall. This is the destination of the procession; sweeping forward, turning at the corner of the palace at the outside edge, the papal procession is bringing the relics of Sebastian to the church of S. Pietro in Vincoli, where the altar will be formally consecrated and the plague ended. Looking off to the left, in the direction of the altar, the pope perhaps can be understood to have already arrived, ready to celebrate mass from the service book held up before him by the kneeling cleric, whose feet so deliberately tucked over the edge insist upon his presence in the physical space of the church.

In sum, the fresco orchestrates a sophisticated balance of past and present, warnings and reassurances. Moved by the pathos of the abandoned corpses and disturbed by the prospect of demonic-angelic alliance, the viewer is guided to reflect on the ways in which God has also provided the means of safety for truly penitent supplicants. Commissioned by either the pope or his nephew

---

a dì 27 di decembre . . . Et depò a dì 6 del mese di iuglio per la gran peste fu ordinato che per Roma si facessero le processione, et però fu portata la venerabile imagine della Nostra Donna di Santa Maria Maiore, et fo messa in uno tabernacolo de legname et fo portata per Roma con grande devotione. (On the 10th of June 1476 Pope Sixtus left Rome because of the infected air, and went to Campagnano, and left the Cardinal Melfita [Giovanni Battista Cibo, bishop of Molfetta] as legate in Rome . . . and the pope returned on the 27th of December . . . And on the 6th of July, because of the great plague, processions were ordered to be made in Rome, and the venerated image of Our Lady of Santa Maria Maggiore was to be carried in procession, and it was placed in a wooden tabernacle and carried through Rome with great devotion.) Stefano Infessura, *Diario della città di Roma*, (ed.) Oreste Tommasini, Fonti per la Storia d'Italia: Scrittori, secolo XV (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1890), 81–82.

50 Dehmer, "Nuova lettura," 73–74. For the plague Virgin of Mercy, see Marshall, "Manipulating the Sacred," 506–18.

in the context of sustained renovation of the formerly dilapidated and abandoned church, the fresco exalts the papacy as the divinely-ordained mediator between humanity and the heavenly powers and insists upon the efficacy of prayers offered by the faithful at the nearby altar of Sebastian, whose miraculous origins are here so effectively displayed.

References

Works Published after 1800

Baschet, Jérôme. 1993. *Les justices de l'au-delà. Les representations de l'enfer en France et en Italie* (*XII^e–XV^e siècle*). Bibliothèque des Ecoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 279. Rome: Ecole française de Rome.

Bourdua, Louise. 2012. The Arts in Florence After the Black Death. In *Florence, Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance*, (ed.) Francis Ames-Lewis, 70–118. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bule, Steven. 1996. Etruscan Echoes in Italian Renaissance Art. In *Etruscan Italy: Etruscan Influences on the Civilizations of Italy from Antiquity to the Modern Era*, (ed.) John Hall, 307–36. Provo: Brigham Young University and Museum of Art.

Casti, Gabriele and Maria Teresa Savini. 2003/04. Il culto parallelo a S. Sebastiano nelle chiese di S. Pietro in Vincoli di Roma e di Pavia. *Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia* 76: 345–448.

Casti, Gabriele and Giuliana Zandri. 1999. *San Pietro in Vincoli*. Le chiese di Roma illustrate, n.s., 31. Rome: Palombi.

Cavallaro, Anna. 1992. *Antoniazzo Romano e gli antoniazzeschi: una generazione di pittori nella Roma del Quattrocento*. Udine: Campanotto.

Chastel, André. 1959. L'*Etruscan Revival* du XV^e siècle. *Revue de l'Art* 1: 165–80.

Cohn, Norman. 1975. *Europe's Inner Demons*. New York: New American Library.

Crawfurd, Raymond. 1914. *Plague and Pestilence in Literature and Art*. Oxford: Phaidon.

Davis, Raymond, trans. 2000. *The Book of Pontiffs* (*Liber Pontificalis*). *The Ancient Biographies of the First Ninety Roman Bishops to AD 715*. Translated Texts for Historians, 6. 2nd rev. ed. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

De Grummond, Nancy. 1986. Rediscovery. In *Etruscan Life and Afterlife: A Handbook of Etruscan Studies*, (ed.) Larissa Bonfante, 18–46. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

———. 2006. *Etruscan Myth, Sacred History and Legend*. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Museum.

Dehmer, Andreas. 1999. Nuova lettura di una dipinta votiva in San Pietro in Vincoli. *Bollettino d'Arte* 84: 71–76.

De Rossi, Giovanni. 1899. *Musaici cristiani e saggi dei pavimenti delle chiese di Roma anteriori al secolo XV*. Rome: Libreria Spithover di Guglielmo Haas.

Duchesne, Louis (ed.). 1955 (vol. 1 1886, vol. 2 1892). *Le Liber Pontificalis*. 2 vols. Paris: De Boccard.

Gionta, Daniele. 2005. *Epigrafia umanistica a Roma.* Messina: Centro Interdipartimentale di Studi Umanistici.

Goffart, Walter. 1988. *The Narrators of Barbarian History* (*AD 500–800*)*: Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Guest, Gerald (ed.) and trans. 1995. *Bible Moralisée, Vienna, Codex Vindobonensis 2554, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek*. London: Harvey Miller.

Gurevich, Aaron. 1989. Santi iracondi e demoni buoni negli *exempla*. In *Santi e demoni nell'alto medioevo occidentale* (*secoli V–XI*), 1045–63. Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo.

Gregg, Joan. 1997. *Devils, Women and Jews: Reflections of the Other in Medieval Sermon Stories*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Horrox, Rosemary. 1994. *The Black Death*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Infessura, Stefano. 1890. *Diario della città di Roma*. Fonti per la Storia d'Italia: Scrittori, secolo XV, (ed.) Oreste Tommasini. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano.

Ippoliti, Alessandro. 1999. *Il complesso di San Pietro in Vincoli e la committenza della Rovere* (*1467–1520*). Rome: Archivio Guido Izzi.

Jacobus de Voragine. 1850. *Legenda Aurea, vulgo Historia Lombardica dicta*, (ed.) Theodor Graesse. Second edition. Leipzig: Arnold.

———. 1993. *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan. 2 vols. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Jameson, Anna. 1970 (reprint, 1896 edition). *Sacred and Legendary Art*. 2 vols. New York: AMS.

Keck, David. 1998. *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kitzinger, Ernst. 1976. Byzantine Art in the Period between Justinian and Iconoclasm. In *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West: Selected Studies*, (ed.) Walter Kleinbauer, 157–232. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

———. 1976 (1955). On Some Icons of the Seventh Century. In *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West: Selected Studies*, (ed.) Walter Kleinbauer, 233–55. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Krauskopf, Ingrid. 2006. The Grave and Beyond. In *The Religion of the Etruscans*, (eds.) Nancy De Grummond and Erika Simon, 66–89. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Leclercq, Henri. 1913. Chaines de Saint Pierre. In *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, (eds.) Fernand Cabrol and Henri Leclercq, 3–19. Paris: Letouzey et Ané.

Link, Luther. 1995. *The Devil: A Mask Without a Face*. London: Reaktion.

Mâle, Emile. 1978. *Religious Art in France: The Twelfth Century. A Study of the Origins of Medieval Iconography*, (ed.) Harry Bober. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Marshall, Louise. 1994. Manipulating the Sacred: Image and Plague in Renaissance Italy. *Renaissance Quarterly* 47: 485–532.

———. 2002. Reading the Body of a Plague Saint: Narrative Altarpieces and Devotional Images of St. Sebastian in Renaissance Art. In *Reading Texts and Images: Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Art and Patronage*, (ed.) Bernard Muir, 237–60. Exeter: Exeter University Press.

———. 2005. La costruzione di un santo contro la peste: il caso di Nicola da Tolentino In *San Nicola da Tolentino nell'arte. Corpus iconografico*, 1: *Dalle origini al Concilio di Trento*, (eds.) Valentino Pace and Roberto Tollo, 87–102. Milan: Biblioteca Egidiana and Federico Motta.

———. 2008. Religion and Epidemic Disease. In *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics and Plagues*, (ed.) Joseph Byrne, 2: 593–600. Westport: Greenwood.

———. Affected Bodies and Bodily Affect: Visualising Emotion in Renaissance Plague Images. In *Performing Emotions in the Medieval and Early Modern World*, (eds.) Joanne McEwan and Philippa Maddern, forthcoming.

Matthiae, Guglielmo. 1960. *San Pietro in Vincoli*. Le chiese di Roma illustrate, 54. Rome: Edizioni Roma.

———. 1967. *Mosaici medioevali delle chiese di Roma*. 2 vols. Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato.

Meiss, Millard and Edith W. Kirsch. 1972. *The Visconti Hours: National Library, Florence*. New York: Braziller.

Mollaret, Henri and Jacqueline Brossollet. 1969. La procession de saint Grégoire et la peste à Rome en l'an 590. *Médecine de France* 57: 13–22.

Muchembled, Robert. 2003. *A History of the Devil, from the Middle Ages to the Present*. London: Polity Press.

Norman, Diana. 1995. Change and Continuity: Art and Religion After the Black Death. In *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art, Society, and Religion 1280–1400*, (ed.) Diana Norman, 1: 177–96. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Oakeshott, Walter. 1967. *Mosaics of Rome*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Offner, Richard and Klara Steinweg. 1967. *Giovanni del Biondo. A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting*, IV/4. New York: New York University.

O'Grady, Joan. 1989. *The Prince of Darkness: The Devil in History, Religion and the Human Psyche*. London: Element.

Palmer, Barbara. 1992. The Inhabitants of Hell: Devils. In *The Iconography of Hell*, (eds.) Clifford Davidson and Thomas Seiler, 20–40. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University.

Paul the Deacon. 1878. Pauli Istoria Langobardorum. In *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, III: *Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saec. VI–IX*, 1, (ed.) Georg Waitz. Hannover: Impensis.

———. 1907. *The History of the Langobards*, trans. William Dudley Foulke. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Polzer, Joseph. 1982. Aspects of the Fourteenth-Century Iconography of Death and the Plague. In *The Black Death: The Impact of the Fourteenth Century Plague*, (ed.) Daniel Williman. *Papers of the Eleventh Annual Conference of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 13: 107–30. Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies.

Rosenwein, Barbara. 2003. Even the Devil (Sometimes) has Feelings: Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages. *The Haskins Society Journal* 14: 1–14.

Russell, Jeffrey Burton. 1984. *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Seymour, Charles. 1966. *Sculpture in Italy, 1400–1500*. Pelican History of Art. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Spencer, John R. 1966. Volterra, 1466. *Art Bulletin* 48: 95–96.

Steingräber, Stephan. 2006. *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting*. Los Angeles: Getty.

Steinmann, Ernst. 1902/03. Ein Votivgemälde in S. Pietro in Vincoli zu Rom. *Kunstchronik* n.s. 14: 534–36.

Stephens, Walter. 2002. *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Strickland, Debra. 2003. *Saracens, Demons and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Zika, Charles. 2004. Putting the Devil Back into the History of Christianity, 1000–1800. In *God, the Devil and a Millennium of Christian Culture*, (eds.) Charles Zika and Ellen Warne, 61–78. Melbourne: RMIT.

———. Demons, Demonology, VI: Christianity. In *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*. Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming.

———. Demons, Demonology, X: Visual Arts. In *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*. Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming.

———. Devil, VI: Visual Arts. In *The Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*. Berlin: De Gruyter, forthcoming.

Zucker, Mark. 1994. *The Illustrated Bartsch*, 24/2: *Early Italian Masters: Commentary*, 2. New York: Abaris.

CHAPTER 2

The Demonic Possession of Richard Dugdale

Brian P. Levack

In July 1688, Richard Dugdale, a nineteen-year-old gardener in the village of Surey, near Whalley in Lancashire, began acting in an abnormal manner. According to his own account and that of his father, his unusual behaviour began shortly after he returned from an ecclesiastical festival in his parish church, where he drank to excess and became involved in a fight with one of the revellers. In this state he reportedly "offered himself to the Devil, on the condition that the Devil would make him a good dancer." The next morning Richard claimed that he had a "burning pain" in his side, and in the nights following he reported the appearance of various supernatural entities in his bedroom. He experienced "strange fits which violently seized him", and he felt an uncontrollable urge to dance.[1]

When a local physician was unable to stop the fits, which increased in frequency and intensity, Dugdale and his father became convinced that he was possessed by the Devil. The following April Dugdale, still plagued by these fits, presented himself to Thomas Jolly, a Congregationalist minister, asking him to expel the evil spirit that was allegedly the cause of his affliction. Dugdale was a member of the Church of England, but there was little likelihood that an Anglican clergyman would be able to accept such an assignment. The Canons of the Church of England of 1604 stipulated that an exorcism could be performed only with the approval of the bishop, and no such episcopal warrant had ever been granted. But Dissenters—a diverse group of nonconformists that included Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers—were not subject to ecclesiastical control by the Church of England and therefore were free to perform such exorcisms. In doing so, however, they were expected to use only the biblically prescribed techniques of prayer and fasting, rather than the Roman Catholic ritual, which Protestants considered superstitious and magical.

1 [Thomas Jolly], *The Surey Demoniack: or, An Account of Satan's Strange and Dreadful Actings in and about the Body of Richard Dugdale of Surey, near Whalley in Lancashire* (London: Jonathan Robinson, 1697); Thomas Jolly, *A Vindication of the Surey Demoniack as No Impostor* (London: Nevill Simmons, 1698).

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_004

On 8 May 1689 Jolly, together with John Carrington, a minister in Lancaster, and thirteen other Dissenting ministers, began the dispossession. Most of these clergymen, including Carrington, were Presbyterians, who had only recently joined forces with the Congregationalists in a 'happy union' to present a more united front against the Church of England. Since Protestant Dissenters had been granted the freedom to practice their religion by the Toleration Act of that year, the ministers could perform the exorcism publicly, and since Lancashire had the largest concentration of non-conformists in England, the ministers could expect large numbers to witness it. The crowds that attended the dispossessions were so great that during one of the prayer meetings a hayloft in a barn where the exorcism took place collapsed under the weight of the onlookers.[2] During these exorcisms, Dugdale's fits continued, interspersed with periods of paralysis, but he also began to display additional symptoms that other demoniacs had been known to exhibit. He reportedly became temporarily deaf, blind, and mute, conversed in languages of which he had no previous knowledge, vomited stones, emitted "hideous" sounds that resembled those of beasts, foretold future events, predicted changes in the weather, and uttered blasphemies. At one point he threatened to tear one of the ministers to pieces.[3]

The prayer meetings that were intended to expel Satan from Dugdale's body continued without success for the better part of a year, during which time the crowds that attended them steadily decreased in size. Failure to successfully dispossess a demoniac was a persistent problem for Protestants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Catholics, who used a much wider array of rituals in their exorcisms, had achieved a considerably higher success rate in casting out demons, giving them a competitive advantage in the propaganda wars of the Age of the Reformation.[4] On 24 March 1690 the ministers, voicing their disappointment and for all practical purposes admitting their failure, performed their last exorcism. The following day Dudgale, after taking medicine from the local apothecary, declared that the demon had left his body and that his symptoms had disappeared. Those symptoms did not reappear, and Dugdale faded into historical obscurity, spending the rest of his life as a gardener, untroubled by demonic assault.

---

2 M. F. Snape, "'The Surey Impostor': Demonic Possession and Religious Conflict in Seventeenth-Century Lancashire," *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society* 90 (1994): 93–114, see 101–2.

3 [Jolly], *The Surey Demoniack*, 4; Jolly, *A Vindication*, 45–6.

4 Brian P. Levack, *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), 93–4.

Dudgale's possession, however, was not doomed to obscurity. In 1697, seven years after this young man's proclaimed deliverance, Thomas Jolly published a narrative of Dugdale's possession and dispossession, arguing that the young man had been relieved of his affliction not by the physic he had taken on 25 March but by the final prayer session the day before.[5] Jolly wrote this account, *The Surey Demoniack*, for two main reasons. The first was to contribute to an ongoing debate between the Dissenters and the established Church of England over the reality of demonic possession and the effectiveness of exorcisms. The main purpose of possession narratives in continental Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was to support rival interpretations of this phenomenon among Catholics and Protestants. Most Catholic narratives were written to prove the validity of a particular possession and the effectiveness of Catholic methods of exorcism, while many Protestant accounts claimed that these possession were either 'counterfeit' (i.e. fraudulent) or the product of physical or mental illness. In England, however, Protestants were divided on this crucial issue. Most narratives that defended the reality of possession were written by Puritans in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and by Protestant Dissenters after 1660. Anglicans endorsed the mainstream Protestant position that the alleged possessions were either fraudulent, in that the demoniacs had faked the symptoms of their possession, or had natural, medical causes. Anglicans did not deny that authentic possessions were possible or that demoniacs could be relieved of their symptoms, but they insisted that such genuine possessions were rare in their day and that any rituals of dispossession that imitated Catholic practice were idolatrous and ineffective. The theological foundation for the Anglican position was the doctrine, developed mainly by Calvinist theologians during the sixteenth century, that although Christ and the Apostles had performed miracles, including the casting out of demons, the performance of all miracles had ceased at the end of the Apostolic Age.[6]

These divisions within English Protestantism on the question of possession became even more pronounced as the number of reported demonic possessions decreased significantly in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

---

5 [Jolly], *The Surey Demoniack*, 50–1; Jolly, *A Vindication*, 28–9.

6 On the cessation of miracles see D. P. Walker, "The Cessation of Miracles," in *Hermeticism and the Renaissance: Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Ingrid Merkel and Allen G. Debus (Washington DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1988), 111–24. On the persistence in the belief in miracles among Protestants in eighteenth-century England see Jane Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), chap. 2.

Most of the Protestant demoniacs during these years came from the ranks of Dissenters, who promoted an experiential religion of 'enthusiasm' and believed in the close interaction between the supernatural and natural worlds. Demonic possession became living proof of this interaction, and public exorcisms of demoniacs served as propaganda for the Dissenting cause. A similar division within Protestantism emerged in late seventeenth and eighteenth-century Germany, where most demonic possessions took place among Pietists, reformers who attempted to breathe life into the official Lutheranism of the day.[7]

A second, more compelling reason for Jolly's decision to publish an account of Richard Dugdale's possession was to contribute to an initiative, undertaken mainly by English Dissenters, Scottish Presbyterians, and New England Puritans, to prove the existence of spirits. They did so against the claims of the so-called Sadducees, a small group of philosophers whose opponents gave them the name of the Jewish sect of the first century BCE that denied the existence of spirits and the immortality of the soul. The number of actual seventeenth-century Sadducees was miniscule, but they represented a formidable intellectual challenge to mainstream denominations, mainly because their claims were allegedly based on the mechanical philosophy, which claimed that the universe operated in a regular way in accordance with the laws of nature, as if it were a machine. The implied threat of the mechanical philosophy, and the Sadducee ideas that it seemed to support, was that of atheism, for as the anti-Sadducee Henry More famously declared, "No Spirit, no God."[8] It did not matter that the natural philosophers who subscribed to the mechanical philosophy, including René Descartes, Robert Boyle, and Isaac Newton, readily accommodated their view of how the natural world operated with their belief in God, who they claimed was not only responsible for creating the laws of nature (the argument of Deists) but who also actively maintained them. Nevertheless anti-Sadducees proceeded to brand those who had denied the existence of spirits—a group that included Thomas Hobbes, Meric Casaubon, and John Webster—as atheists and then offered 'empirical proof' that spirits did in fact exist.[9]

---

7 Levack, *The Devil Within*, 220, 226, 237.

8 Henry More, *An Antidote against Atheism* (London: Roger Daniel, 1653), 278.

9 Meric Casaubon, *A Treatise Concerning Enthusiasme as it is an Effect of Nature: but is Mistaken by Many for either Divine Inspiration or Diabolical Possession* (London: R. D., 1655); Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: Andrew Crooke, 1651); John Webster, *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft* (London: J. M., 1677).

The first systematic responses to the claims of the Sadducees came from Joseph Glanvill, an English cleric who was also a member of the Royal Society, and George Sinclair, a Scottish natural philosopher from the University of Glasgow.[10] The 'empirical' evidence they presented for the existence of spirits consisted of testimony regarding the activities of witches, noises made by poltergeists, the sighting of monsters and other 'prodigies', and other indications of apparent supernatural intervention in the natural world. There was little in these instances of alleged demonic activity that could reasonably be offered as empirical proof that demons did actually exist. In 1691, however, the English Presbyterian Richard Baxter published a long refutation of the Sadducee position, *The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits*, in which he offered instances of demonic possession throughout Europe to prove his case.[11] Cases of demonic possession constituted a far more persuasive argument for the existence of spirits than the *maleficia* of witches, since those who observed demoniacs, could visibly witness firsthand the apparent effects of the devil's control of the person's physical movements and hear him speak in a very different voice from that of the demoniac. For Baxter the symptoms of possession thus provided the empirical evidence that spirits did in fact exist and actually took possession of a human body.

Jolly's narrative of Richard Dugdale's possession was clearly intended to support the anti-Sadducee position. Referring specifically to Baxter's treatise, Jolly claimed that the publication of his book, which was urged by many eminent divines and physicians, was intended to be "a very likely expedient for rooting out atheism, debauchery, Sadducism, and devilishness."[12] *The Surey Demoniack*, therefore, served the same function as the narratives of the possession of the eleven-year-old Scottish demoniac Christian Shaw in 1696, that of a young girl in county Antrim, Ulster in 1698, and that of Patrick Morton in Pittenweem, Scotland in 1705.[13] Even before Jolly started writing the

10 Joseph Glanvill, *Saducismus Triumphatus* (London: J. Collins and S. Lownds, 1681); George Sinclair, *Satan's Invisible World Discovered* (Edinburgh: John Reid, 1685).

11 Richard Baxter, *The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits and, consequently, of the Immortality of Souls of the Malice and Misery of the Devils and the Damned* (London: T. Parkhurst and J. Salisbury, 1691).

12 Jolly, *The Surey Demoniack*, sig. A2 verso.

13 *A True Narrative of the Sufferings and Relief of a Young Girle* (Edinburgh: James Watson, 1698), reprinted in *A History of the Witches of Renfrewshire* (Paisley: A. Gardner, 1877); Daniel Higgs, *The wonderfull and true relation of the bewitching a young girle in Ireland* (n.p., 1699); *An Answer of a Letter from a Gentleman in Fife to a Nobleman* ([Edinburgh], n.p., 1705). See Brian P. Levack, *Witch-hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics and Religion* (London: Routledge, 2008), 125–9.

narrative (probably in 1691), he had referred to incidents of demonic possession as evidence against the Sadducee position. He had endorsed the views of the New England Congregationalist minister Increase Mather, who in *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences* (1684) had cited the possessions of Ann Cole at Hartford in 1662 and Elizabeth Knapp at Groton in 1672 as "things which are preternatural and not accomplished without diabolical operation."[14] He had also supported the position of Cotton Mather, Increase's son, who in a treatise on the possession of the Goodwin children in Boston in 1688 had argued that the four children's possession proved the existence of spirits.[15] It should come as no surprise therefore that when Richard Baxter learned of Richard Dugdale's possession, he in turn asked Jolly for information regarding the case so that he could refer to it in *The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits*.

Baxter died before he could publish whatever information Jolly might have given him. Another opportunity to use the Dugdale episode for polemical purposes passed in 1693 when Nathaniel Mather, Increase's brother, proposed that Jolly's account of Dugdale's possession be appended to a forthcoming treatise by Increase on witchcraft. This time Jolly claimed that his manuscript was not yet finished.[16] The question remains, however, why Jolly waited four years after that to publish *The Surey Demoniack*, which was a joint undertaking with John Carrington, who wrote most of the narrative, while Jolly collected and published the testimony of witnesses to Dugdale's possession. Perhaps the fear of censorship by means of the Licensing Act, which had been renewed in 1685 for a period of seven years, made him fear prosecution by the Anglican establishment. Jolly had in fact been arrested five times since his ejection from his benefice at Altham in 1662.[17] But Jolly waited yet another two years after the act lapsed before going into print. It is unclear what impelled him eventually to do so. One possibility is that some of the Presbyterian ministers who had participated in the dispossession no longer believed in the authenticity of Dugdale's possession and therefore had tried to prevent the publication of the narrative. Indeed, John Carrington expressed surprise that the book had

14 Increase Mather, *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences, Wherein an Account is given of Many Remarkable and Very Memorable Events which Happened in this Last Age, especially in New-England* (Boston: Samuel Green, 1684), chap. 5. Mather's emphasis on a wide variety of preternatural events, including only these two possessions, meant that his work had more in common with Glanvill and Sinclair than with Baxter.

15 Cotton Mather, *Memorable Providences regarding Witchcrafts and Possessions* (Boston: R. P., 1689). A second edition appeared in 1691 with an introduction by Baxter, and a third edition in 1697, the year that *The Surey Demoniack* was published.

16 Jolly, *The Surey Demoniack*, sigs A2 recto-verso.

17 Snape, " 'The Surey Impostor' ", 99–100.

actually seen the light of day despite the efforts of so many "sober, grave, Dissenting ministers" to the contrary.[18] According to this theory, Jolly published *The Surey Demoniack* to counter the Latitudinarian and free-thinking tendencies that were infecting the Dissenting community.[19]

Although opposition to Presbyterian heterodoxy may have played a part in Jolly's decision to publish, the appearance of a pamphlet on a different possession in Lancashire in 1696 provided the immediate incentive for him to go to press. In that year Zachary Taylor, the Anglican rector of Wigan and chaplain to the bishop of Chester, published an account of the counterfeit possession of one Thomas Ashton, a weaver in Wigan who was exorcized by four Roman Catholic priests in January 1696 and who later confessed that the entire possession was a hoax. Taylor's pamphlet detailed all the tricks Ashton had used to convince the Catholics and Protestants who witnessed the exorcism that the Devil was the cause of his possession.[20] He argued that the exorcisms were part of an elaborate theatrical production, "a puppet show of religion" in which the priests had so "overacted each part of the play that the plain relation of it will appear more like burlesque than narrative."[21] In the dedication of *The Devil Turn'd Casuist*, Taylor also referred to the counterfeit possession of Alice Pennington, a maid-servant of Mr. John Urmiston, a Catholic in Leigh parish, and her exorcism by a Catholic priest in 1671.[22] He also included a report by Thomas Marsden regarding the possession of the twelve-year-old son of one Mr. Cook in the parish of Leyland in the mid 1670s. Marsden, one of Jolly's associates, claimed that this boy's initial seizures were result of an epileptic fit but that he had faked the other symptoms of his possession.[23]

The position Taylor took in *The Devil Turn'd Casuist* was standard Anglican fare, a line of argument that orthodox clergy had taken in their efforts to discredit the exorcisms performed by the Puritan preachers John Darrell and George More in the late 1590s and the early years of the seventeenth

18 [John Carrington], *The Lancashire Levite Rebiuk'd, or, A Farther Vindication of the Dissenters from Popery, Superstition, Ignorance and Knavery Charged on Them by Mr. Zachary Taylor* (London: R. J., 1698).

19 Jonathan Westaway and Richard D. Harrison, "'The Surey Demoniack': Defining Protestantism in 1690s Lancashire," in *Unity and Diversity in the Church*, (ed.) R. N. Swanson [Studies in Church History, vol. 32] (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 269–72.

20 Zachary Taylor, *The Devil Turn'd Casuist, or the Cheats of Rome, Laid Open in the Exorcism of a Despairing Devil* (London: E. Whitlock, 1696).

21 Ibid., sig. A3 verso, p. 14.

22 Ibid. sigs B2 verso-B4 recto. Urmiston had converted to Protestantism when he married his Protestant wife but had returned to the Catholic fold upon her death.

23 Ibid., sigs A4 verso-B2 recto.

century. Seeking to limit the popular appeal of Puritan as well as Catholic exorcisms, the clergymen Samuel Harsnett, John Deacon, and John Walker, with the support of Richard Bancroft, bishop of London and later archbishop of Canterbury, had argued that all these possessions were pretended and that the Puritan exorcisms, no less than those performed by Jesuit priests, were superstitious and popish. Although Darrell and More's dispossessions had used the biblically sanctioned Protestant method of expelling demons by prayer and fasting, they also imitated the Catholic practice of adjuring, i.e. commanding, the Devil or actually engaging in a dialogue with him. This allowed Harsnett to argue that these Puritan dispossessions were in fact 'popish' and therefore superstitious.[24] Harsnett's position found further support from playwrights, most notably Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, who reinforced clerical scepticism by depicting possessions and exorcisms as fraudulent.[25] Bancroft and Harsnett also received support for their position from physicians, most notably Edward Jorden, who in 1603 diagnosed the symptoms of the Puritan demoniac Mary Glover as the result of hysteria.[26]

The Devil Turn'd Casuist offered a preview of the arguments Taylor would present in *The Surey Impostor*, his vitriolic response to Jolly's 'scandalous' narrative in 1697, and in a second treatise on the subject in 1698.[27] In these works Taylor had little difficulty exposing the inconsistency of Dugdale's statements and refuting the claims of the ministers who performed the exorcisms. Dugdale's testimony in July 1695 that the ministers had cured him by means of prayer and fasting, followed ten days later by his contradictory testimony that his fits were the result of natural causes, certainly called into question the validity of the young man's possession and the credibility of the Dissenting

24 Samuel Harsnett, *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practises of John Darrel* (London: John Wolfe, 1599); Samuel Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (London: James Roberts, 1603).

25 William Shakespeare, *King Lear* (Folio text), Act 3, Scene 4: 108–33. *Twelfth Night*, Act 3, Scene 4: 101, 127–8; Act 4, Scene 2: 5–6; see William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works*, (eds.) Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett and William Montgomery (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Ben Jonson, *The Devil is an Ass* (London: I. B., 1631), Act 5, Scene 3: 1–8; Scene 5: 25–28.

26 Edward Jorden, *A Briefe Discourse of a Disease Called the Suffocation of the Mother* (London: John Windet, 1603).

27 Zachary Taylor, *The Surey Impostor, being an Answer to a Late Fanatical Pamphlet Entitled The Surey Demoniack* (London: John Jones, 1697). See also Zachary Taylor, *Popery, Superstition, Ignorance, and Knavery . . . very fully proved upon the Dissenters that were concerned in the Surey Imposture* (London: John Jones, 1698).

ministers' claim that they had succeeded in dispossessing him.[28] Taylor also showed how Dugdale had managed to fake the symptoms of his possession using a variety of tricks, including picking up stones off the floor of the barn and then pretending to vomit them and making animal noises such as he was known to have done when he was a schoolboy. He had also mastered the art of 'speaking from the belly' in a deep coarse voice. Dugdale's prediction when his fits would resume also suggested that he was deliberately staging them.[29]

Taylor made a strong case against the authenticity of Dugdale's possession, and modern scholars, most of whom do not believe in the existence of the Devil, or at least in his ability to intervene in human affairs, understandably take Taylor's side in the controversy and refer to his 'victory' over Jolly and Carrington.[30] Modern scholars also tend to side with Samuel Harsnett's scepticism regarding the possessions and exorcisms performed by Jesuits and Puritans at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[31] D. P. Walker, who argues that most of the French and English possessions of the late sixteenth century were fraudulent, reflects the same scepticism regarding the reality of possession.[32]

Sympathy with Taylor's 'rationalism' should not, however, prevent a critical examination of his sceptical account of the possession. One problem with Taylor's claim that this possession was counterfeit pertains to Dugdale's motive for perpetrating such a hoax. Demoniacs in the early modern period usually faked their possessions for one of four reasons. The first is that as young and subordinate members of society, they wished to receive unaccustomed attention from the community. The second is that they wished to violate moral or social conventions with impunity, since demoniacs were not considered responsible for what they did while the Devil occupied their bodies and controlled their mental faculties. The third is that they wished to use the pretext of their possession to accuse enemies of their families of having caused their afflictions by means of witchcraft, in the way that Anne Gunter had feigned her possession in 1604 so that she could accuse three women in her village of

28 Taylor, *The Surey Impostor*, 7–8.

29 Ibid., 24–8.

30 See Snape, " 'The Surey Impostor,' " 111–13.

31 For a critique of the modern tendency to take Harsnett's side in this controversy, see Tom Webster, "(Re)possession and Dispossession: John Darrell and Diabolical Discourse," in *Witchcraft and the Act of 1604*, (eds.) John Newton and Jo Bath (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 91–111.

32 D. P. Walker, *Unclean Spirits: Unclean Spirits: Possession and Exorcism in France and England in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).

witchcraft.[33] The fourth was to profit financially from their affliction, either by receiving charitable contributions from sympathetic neighbours or by having family members charge admission to observe their seizures and contortions.[34]

It was impossible to attribute any of these motives to Dugdale, who showed no signs of seeking fame when he asked to be exorcized; who did not use his possession to violate moral standards with impunity; who accused no one of causing his possession by witchcraft; and who did not solicit or receive financial contributions from those who witnessed his exorcisms. The motive that Taylor attributed to him was that he conspired with the Catholics to embarrass the Dissenters by persuading them to accept a counterfeit possession as authentic. Taylor claimed that the Dugdale family, which had only recently converted to Protestantism, participated in this plot to make amends for their abandonment of the Catholic faith. A wealthy Catholic gentlewoman and her Catholic chambermaid, with whom Dugdale was involved, had allegedly enticed him to participate in this scheme. This was similar to the charge made against Susanna Fowles, an English woman who faked her possession in 1698, allegedly at the suggestion of a Roman Catholic relative, thus recalling the counterfeit possession of William Perry, known as the Boy of Bilson, whom Catholic priests had exorcized in 1622.[35] Taylor's objective was to show that Dissenters were just as credulous as Catholics in matters relating to the Devil's relationship with human beings. He also wanted to show that the Dissenters had learned how to pretend that they could cast out demons from the Papists, "an old juggle that our predecessors, the Puritans, had practised."[36]

The final grounds for reluctance to accept Taylor's analysis of Dugdale's possession is that the symptoms he initially manifested in July 1688, unlike his behaviour during the exorcism, showed few signs of dissimulation. There was no reason why Dugdale should have pretended to feel pain in his side or experience violent fits before anyone suggested that he was possessed by the Devil.

---

33 Brian P. Levack, "Possession, Witchcraft and the Law in Jacobean England," *Washington and Lee Law Review* 52 (1996): 1613–40.

34 In 1622 Katheren Malpas pretended to be bewitched to secure financial contributions those who came to witness her fits. Richard Raiswell, "Faking It: A Case of Counterfeit Possession in the Reign of James I," *Renaissance and Reformation* 23 (1999): 29–49, see 29–30, 42.

35 *The Second Part of the Boy of Bilson, or, a True and Particular Relation of the Impostor Susanna Fowles, Wife of John Fowles of Hammersmith, who Pretended herself Possessed by the Devil* (London: E. Whitlock, 1698); [Richard Baddeley], *The Boy of Bilson: or, a True Discovery of the Late Notorious Impostures of Certain Roman Priests in their Pretended Exorcisme* (London: F[elix] K[ingston], 1622).

36 Taylor, *The Surey Impostor*, sig. A3 recto.

It is equally implausible that he pretended to have visions of supernatural creatures to convince members of his family—his only audience in July 1688—that he was demonically possessed. Having visions was not usually considered among the initial signs of demonic possession and was not likely therefore to have convinced an observer that the Devil had entered his body.

If Taylor's claim that Dugdale had faked his possession lacked persuasive force, his other 'rationalist' argument—that the possession had natural, medical causes—was even less persuasive than the explanation based on fraud. In the early modern period physicians in the so-called naturalist tradition often claimed that demoniacs were suffering from one of three diseases: epilepsy, melancholy, or hysteria. These natural, medical explanations of what was 'really happening' when a person began to display the symptoms of possession failed to offer a persuasive explanation of specific possessions, mainly because none of the medical diagnoses could explain all the symptoms exhibited by any one demoniac.

In this case Taylor, having consulted with one Dr Radcliffe, argued that Dugdale's distemper was "epilepsy combined with convulsive motions" and that his symptoms were therefore "not diabolical but preternatural."[37] There are three problems with this line of argument. The first is that Dugdale, by Taylor's own admission, did not lose consciousness during his possession, as epileptics usually did. The second is that most demonologists held that the Devil worked through, rather than outside, nature and was the cause of so-called 'preternatural' symptoms, i.e. those that could be viewed as abnormal or pathological. In their view the preternatural was perfectly compatible with the diabolical, so they would have had no problem accepting Radcliffe's diagnosis.[38] Third, Taylor did not attribute all of Dugdale's behaviour to epilepsy. Deception remained the core of Taylor's argument. In his view Dugdale's natural distemper simply gave him an "advantage" in deceiving the Dissenting ministers. Taylor had to admit that it was difficult for an untrained observer to "discern betwixt the fits that were 'real' and those that were dissembled."[39]

The most serious weakness of scholarly interpretations of possession as the product of fraud or illness or both is that they exclude the possibility that the symptoms displayed by demoniacs—especially those displayed during the initial stages of the possession—were the manifestation of a genuine religious

37 Ibid., 29–30.

38 Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 271–2. Jolly, *The Surey Demoniack*, 1, also claimed that Dugdale "had many preternatural motions."

39 Taylor, *The Surey Impostor*, 48.

experience. These interpretations discount or disregard the relevance of the demoniac's religious beliefs as well as those who exorcized him. I argue here that Dugdale's possession was the product of his guilt for his sins; that his words and actions during the possession and exorcism, especially those prompted by the ministers, followed a distinctly Protestant script; and that either consciously or not, Dugdale was involved in the performance of a religious drama in which the ministers and those who prayed and fasted also participated.

So what caused Richard Dugdale to experience violent fits and visions in July 1688? These fits began after he attended a rush-bearing, an ecclesiastical festival in which parishioners gathered rushes and other herbs and strew them on the earthen floor of the church. The festival, which often involved a considerable amount of drinking and dancing, was part of the festive culture that Anglicans had promoted throughout the seventeenth century but which Puritans and later Dissenters labelled as superstitious and popish.[40] Dugdale's attendance at this rush-bearing, his drunkenness, and his involvement in a 'scuffle' during the festival all were violations of the culture of discipline demanded by Puritans in the early seventeenth century and by Dissenters after 1660. Puritans and Dissenters also disapproved of dancing, which by all accounts was Dugdale's great talent. As a young man who was known to have been leading a 'profane' life style, he might very well have felt guilty about his moral failings, and his admission that he had tried to make a pact with the Devil to make him a better dancer suggests that his guilt was sincere.

In contemporary terminology, Dugdale's possession could readily have been attributed to religious melancholy, a term that the English writer Robert Burton described in *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) to describe the profound anxiety or even despair that often accompanied the quest for salvation.[41] Melancholy was a psychosomatic disease that originated in the spleen and affected the imagination. Burton classified it as a disease of the mind. Burton considered demonic possession one form of melancholy, but religious melancholy, which was closely related to it, offers a plausible explanation of the cause of such possessions.[42] A plausible diagnosis of Dugdale's behaviour was that he was hounded by feelings of guilt for his moral transgressions. His fits were a response to his fear that he might be damned for having made a pact

40 For the conflict between these two cultures see David Underdown, *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), chap. 3.

41 Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, (eds.) Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicolas K. Kiessling and Ronda L. Blair, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989–1994), 3: 330–33.

42 Ibid., 1: 130–6.

with the Devil. The reason he sought out Thomas Jolly was not to ensnare him in a Catholic plot but to find relief from his spiritual turmoil.

Dugdale's words and behaviour reflected a distinctly Protestant culture that contrasted strikingly with the religious culture of Catholicism after the Council of Trent (1545–1563). The hallmark of that Protestant culture was a preoccupation with sin and the difficulty in resisting temptation. This was especially true of Protestants in the Calvinist tradition, but all Protestants shared the same preoccupation with temptation and sin.[43] Of course Catholics were also concerned with sin, but they never displayed the same pessimism as Protestants regarding the possibility of overcoming it, mainly because Catholics had access to the confessional and the relief it offered even to the most persistent sinner. Even more important, Protestants and Catholics differed in their views regarding the types of sin with which they were constantly tempted. Catholics, both before and after the Reformation, were most concerned with sexual sins, whereas Protestants, who made no distinction between mortal and venial sins, were equally concerned with what Catholics considered lesser offences. These included such violations of moral discipline as dancing, playing cards, fighting, and petty theft.[44] Protestants were of course also concerned with sexual offences, but they made no distinction between their gravity and that of other infractions of the moral code.

This distinction between Protestant and Catholic cultures had a direct bearing on the character of Protestant and Catholic possessions. The guilt and anxiety that triggered many Catholic possessions, the great majority of which affected nuns and laywomen in their teens and twenties, originated in their guilt for violating the Christian code of sexual morality by thought or action. Protestant demoniacs, especially Protestant boys and men (who formed a much higher percentage of Protestant demoniacs), rarely revealed a concern with sexual sin. Like Richard Dugdale, their sins involved other moral offences.[45] Many Protestant possessions, moreover, took place during their adolescence or youth, when they were especially concerned whether they were predestined to eternal salvation.

Dugdale's confession to having made a pact with the Devil also identified his possession script as Protestant. Very few demoniacs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries confessed to, or were accused of, making a pact with

43 Nathan Johnstone, "The Protestant Devil: The Experience of Temptation in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 43 (2004): 173–205.

44 This was particularly evident in the dispossession of William Somers in 1597. University of Nottingham. MS MiF 10/4.

45 Levack, *The Devil Within*, chap. 8.

the Devil. The reason for this is that demoniacs were not supposed to be held legally or morally accountable for what they did while the Devil controlled their behaviour. Making a pact with the Devil was a sin that witches, not demoniacs, committed, and only in a few instances were Catholic or Protestant demoniacs accused of doing so.[46] A frequent theme in Protestant possessions, however, was that the possessed might *become* a witch, a prospect that called into question the moral status of the demoniac.[47] Dugdale's admission that he tried to make a pact with the Devil (it is unclear whether he thought he had concluded it) reflects the conflation of the categories of witch and demoniac that was common in Protestant possession narratives. In arguing that his possession was counterfeit, Zachary Taylor made no reference to this statement by Dugdale. If he had, it would have weakened his argument that the ministers' exorcism was popish. Catholic exorcists would not have encouraged Dugdale to make such an admission, whereas the Dissenting ministers would find nothing unusual in his reference to his contractual negotiation with the Devil.

Dugdale's reference to the appearance of various unspecified supernatural beings, which recalls a similar vision of the young Puritan demoniac Thomas Darling in 1597, does not find a place in conventional Protestant possession scripts. Nor does it find a place in the many 'divine' possessions of Catholic nuns whose visions were reinterpreted as demonic by their exorcists. Dugdale's visions do, however, testify to the sincerity of his spiritual turmoil that he experienced after his attendance at the rush-bearing the night before. That anguish reflected a conflict between the Calvinist condemnation of dancing and the more relaxed, less censorious moral strictures of the Church of England to which he belonged. The fits experienced the day after the rush-bearing were the product of that inner conflict. The report that Dugdale spoke with spirits, one good and one bad, also suggests that he had serious qualms of conscience after his dancing, drinking, and fighting.[48]

The report that Dugdale spoke with two voices, his own natural voice and that of Satan, during his possession also reflects a distinctly Protestant theme in possession narratives. In Catholic narratives the demoniac almost always spoke in a deep, masculine voice, which was taken as a sign that the Devil had assumed complete control of the possessed person's personality. In Protestant possessions, however, the demoniac often spoke in two voices, suggesting that

46 The demoniacs Françoise Fontaine in 1591, Nicholas Prutenus in 1600, and Christoph Haizmann in 1676 all admitted that they had made pacts with the Devil, but none of them was ever prosecuted for witchcraft.

47 Levack, *The Devil Within*, chap. 8.

48 Jolly, *The Surey Demoniack*, 22.

the possessed person was engaged in a dialogue with the Devil and was resisting the temptation to sin during the exorcism.[49] Speaking in two voices also indicated that the demoniac was conscious of the possession, foreclosing the possibility that he or she was unaware of the Devil's control of his movements and mental faculties, which was a standard feature of Catholic scripts.

The distinctly Protestant script that Richard Dugdale followed before and during his exorcism, even if the Dissenting ministers had suggested some of it to him, contradicts that claim that Dugdale, whose family had recently converted to Catholicism, participated in a Catholic conspiracy similar to the one that Thomas Ashton was allegedly a part of in 1696. It also raises questions regarding the fraudulent nature of the entire undertaking. As argued above, it is likely that Richard Dugdale actually did experience fits as a result of his religious anxiety or 'melancholy' over his conduct at the rush-bearing. One might also question whether he was still pretending to be possessed when he displayed other signs of possession during his exorcism. Unlike other demoniacs who confessed to having deliberately faked the symptoms of their possessions—something Dugdale never did—his exhibition of the signs of possession can more sympathetically be viewed as his effort to follow the script of a Protestant possession that the ministers suggested to him.

I agree with Zachary Taylor's claim that the possession and exorcism of Richard Dugdale, just like that of Thomas Ashton in 1696, was a theatrical production. I would go further, however, in claiming that *all* possessions and exorcisms are theatrical performances that are staged before an audience large or small and involve the following of a script. My objection to the arguments of contemporaries like Taylor is that these theatrical performances were not always the product of fraud and deception. It is quite possible and even likely that demoniacs and exorcists were unconsciously following a script that was encoded in their religious culture. The demoniacs learned those scripts from reading or hearing about other possessions and by listening to sermons on the Devil's wiles. Once they were diagnosed as demoniacs, the possessed started assuming that role, acting as demoniacs were expected to act. This assumption of the role of the demoniac did not always involve deliberate fraud. The possessed person, especially when plagued by feelings of guilt, naturally assumed that role and was assisted by the promptings of ministers who also believed in the reality of the possession. Such was the case of Richard Dugdale and the ministers who exorcized him in the most famous and controversial possession in England in the late seventeenth century.

49 Levack, *The Devil Within*, chap. 6.

References

Archival Sources

University of Nottingham. MS MiF 10/4.

Works Published before 1800

An Answer of a Letter from a Gentleman in Fife to a Nobleman. 1705. [Edinburgh], n.p.

A True Narrative of the Sufferings and Relief of a Young Girle. 1698. Edinburgh: James Watson.

[Baddeley, Richard]. 1622. *The Boy of Bilson: or, a True Discovery of the Late Notorious Impostures of Certain Roman Priests in their Pretended Exorcisme*. London: F[elix] K[ingston].

Baxter, Richard. 1691. *The Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits and, consequently, of the Immortality of Souls of the Malice and Misery of the Devils and the Damned*. London: T. Parkhurst and J. Salisbury.

[Carrington, John]. 1698. *The Lancashire Levite Rebiuk'd, or, A Farther Vindication of the Dissenters from Popery, Superstition, Ignorance and Knavery Charged on Them by Mr. Zachary Taylor*. London: R. J.

Casaubon, Meric. 1655. *A Treatise Concerning Enthusiasme as it is an Effect of Nature: but is Mistaken by Many for either Divine Inspiration or Diabolical Possession*. London: R. D.

Glanvill, Joseph. 1681. *Saducismus Triumphatus*. London: J. Collins and S. Lownds.

Harsnett, Samuel. 1599. *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practises of John Darrel*. London: John Wolf.

Harsnett, Samuel. 1603. *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*. London: James Roberts.

Higgs, Daniel. 1699. *The wonderfull and true relation of the bewitching a young girle in Ireland*. N.p., n.p.

Hobbes, Thomas. 1651. *Leviathan*. London: Andrew Crooke.

[Jolly, Thomas]. 1697. *The Surey Demoniack: or, An Account of Satan's Strange and Dreadful Actings in and about the Body of Richard Dugdale of Surey, near Whalley in Lancashire*. London: Jonathan Robinson.

Jolly, Thomas. 1698. *A Vindication of the Surey Demoniack as No Impostor*. London: Nevill Simmons.

Jorden, Edward. 1603. *A Briefe Discourse of a Disease Called the Suffocation of the Mother*. London: John Windet.

Jonson, Ben. 1631. *The Devil is an Ass*. London: I. B.

Mather, Cotton. 1689. *Memorable Providences regarding Witchcrafts and Possessions*. Boston: R. P.

Mather, Increase. 1684. *An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences, Wherein an Account is given of Many Remarkable and Very Memorable Events which Happened in this Last Age, especially in New-England*. Boston: Samuel Green.

More, Henry. 1653. *An Antidote against Atheism*. London: Roger Daniel.

The Second Part of the Boy of Bilson, or, a True and Particular Relation of the Impostor Susanna Fowles, Wife of John Fowles of Hammersmith, who Pretended herself Possessed by the Devil. 1698. London: E. Whitlock.

Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works*. (Eds.) Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett and William Montgomery. 1987. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sinclair, George. 1685. *Satan's Invisible World Discovered*. Edinburgh: John Reid.

Taylor, Zachary. 1696. *The Devil Turn'd Casuist, or the Cheats of Rome, Laid Open in the Exorcism of a Despairing Devil*. London: E. Whitlock.

———. 1698. *Popery, Superstition, Ignorance, and Knavery . . . very fully proved upon the Dissenters that were concerned in the Surey Imposture*. London: John Jones.

———. 1697. *The Surey Impostor, being an Answer to a Late Fanatical Pamphlet Entitled The Surey Demoniack.* London: John Jones.

Webster, John. 1677. *The Displaying of Supposed Witchcraft*. London: J. M.

Works Published after 1800

A History of the Witches of Renfrewshire. 1877. Paisley: A. Gardner.

Burton, Robert. 1989–1994. *The Anatomy of Melancholy*. (Eds.) Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicolas K. Kiessling and Ronda L. Blair. 3 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Clark, Stuart. 1997. *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Johnstone, Nathan. 2004. The Protestant Devil: The Experience of Temptation in Early Modern England. *Journal of British Studies* 43: 173–205.

Levack, Brian P. 2013. *The Devil Within: Possession and Exorcism in the Christian West*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

———. 1996. Possession, Witchcraft and the Law in Jacobean England. *Washington and Lee Law Review* 52: 1613–40.

———. 2008. *Witch-hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics and Religion*. London: Routledge.

Raiswell, Richard. 1999. Faking It: A Case of Counterfeit Possession in the Reign of James I. *Renaissance and Reformation* 23: 29–49.

Shaw, Jane. 2006. *Miracles in Enlightenment England*. New Haven and London.

Snape, Michael F. 1994. 'The Surey Impostor': Demonic Possession and Religious Conflict in Seventeenth-century Lancashire, *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire. Antiquarian Society* 90: 93–114.

Underdown, David. 1985. *Revel, Riot and Rebellion: Popular Politics and Culture in England 1603–1660*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Walker, D. P. 1988. The Cessation of Miracles. In *Hermeticism and the Renaissance: Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Ingrid Merkel and Allen G. Debus, 111–24. Washington D.C.: Folger Shakespeare Library.

Walker, D. P. 1981. *Unclean Spirits: Possession and Exorcism in France and England in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Webster, Tom. 2008. (Re)possession and Dispossession: John Darrell and Diabolical Discourse, In *Witchcraft and the Act of 1604*, (eds.) John Newton and Jo Bath, 91–111. Leiden: Brill.

Westaway, Jonathan and Richard D. Harrison. 1996. 'The Surey Demoniack': Defining Protestantism in 1690s Lancashire. In *Unity and Diversity in the Church*, Studies in Church History, vol. 32, (ed.) R. N. Swanson, 266–82. Oxford: Blackwell.

CHAPTER 3

Salem Girls (1692): Problems of Gender and Agency

E. J. Kent

When the Salem Village witch trials began early in 1692 there was very little to indicate that they were not like previous witch trials in New England.[1] But instead of complaints against one, two, or even three witches, the Salem trials escalated massively until by late in the year over one hundred and fifty individuals had been accused, nineteen people had been executed and at least five others had died in jail.[2] Between March and July accusations were focused in Salem Village. Between July and September, the focus shifted to neighbouring Andover. In all, over the course of 1692 twenty-six communities in Massachusetts had experienced witchcraft accusations.[3] Salem witchcraft "extended far beyond Salem Village to encompass large portions of Essex County and northern New England in general."[4] The single most important group of witchcraft accusers in these trials was a group of girls and teenage women, aged between nine and twenty years of age, who levelled accusations of witchcraft against women and men far superior to themselves in status and years. Young, female accusers were the main enactors of bewitchment in the courtroom and elsewhere. They provided a centrepiece for the theological exposition that accompanied the trials, and they were fundamental to the legal process.

These 'Salem Girls' have been written about extensively over several centuries, and since about the mid-twentieth-century have routinely been portrayed as psychologically disturbed or mentally ill. So in 1949 Marion Starkey, author of *The Devil in Massachusetts*, wrote that the young girls lived "in dread of spectral rape by the incubus and of giving birth to a demon child."[5] In 1956 the historian

1 Bernard Rosenthal, *Salem Story: Reading the Witch Trials of 1692* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 42.

2 Bernard Rosenthal, Introduction, in *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, (ed.) Bernard Rosenthal (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 23.

3 Richard Latner, "The Long and the Short of Salem Witchcraft: Chronology and Collective Violence in 1692," *Journal of Social History* 42.1 (2008): 136–156, see 138–39.

4 Mary Beth Norton, "Essex County Witchcraft," *William and Mary Quarterly* 65.3 (2008): 483–88, see 487.

5 Marion Starkey, *The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Inquiry Into the Salem Witch Trials* (London: Trust Books, 1963), 94–95.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_005

Samuel Eliot Morison wrote that the young accusers, "finding themselves the object of unusual attention, and with the exhibitionism natural to young girls [they] persisted in their accusations for fear of being found out. . . ." Morison also offered the (somewhat startling) conclusion that "a good spanking administered to the young girls, and lovers provided for the older ones" would have prevented the trials from ever happening.[6] In 1969 Chadwick Hansen, author of *Witchcraft at Salem*, wrote that the young female accusers were "not fraudulent but pathological. They were hysterics, and in the clinical rather than the popular sense of that term. These people were not merely overexcited: they were mentally ill."[7] The 1970s saw a shift to social historical approaches to the 1692 trials that, while innovative in many ways, largely obscured the young female accusers. In the landmark *Salem Possessed*, published in 1974, Boyer and Nissenbaum left the young accusers off their map of the village because "we think it a mistake to treat the girls themselves as decisive shapers of the witchcraft outbreak as it evolved."[8] In 1989 the first feminist study of witch trials in New England, Carol Karlsen's *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman*, treated the young female accusers, not as individuals, but as emblematic of all young women in New England by arguing they were acting out a "fierce negotiation . . . about the legitimacy of female discontent, resentment and anger."[9]

In the most recent historical studies, historians have tended to argue that the young female accusers were fraudulent in their afflictions. In 1993, in *Salem Story*, Bernard Rosenthal argued that the young accusers were "fabricating spectres" and thus knowingly "dissembling."[10] By 2009 Rosenthal had sharpened his point. In his General Introduction to *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, Rosenthal suggests the inevitably of a conclusion of fraud: "The challenge for those rejecting fraud as an explanation is to offer an evidence-based alternative . . . those who support the centrality of fraud among the main accusers have some hard evidence." Rosenthal concludes that the "evidence of fraud is frequent [and] difficult to negate."[11] Such analyses are by no means new: in 1764 Thomas Hutchinson wrote that a "little attention must force

6 Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England* (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 259–60.

7 Chadwick Hansen, *Witchcraft at Salem* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1969), x.

8 Paul Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 35 n. 26.

9 Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of A Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 246.

10 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 38, 39.

11 Rosenthal, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 26–27, 30.

the conviction that the whole was a scene of fraud and imposture, began by young girls, who at first perhaps thought of nothing more than being pitied and indulged . . . rather than confess their fraud, suffered the lives of so many innocents to be taken away, through the credulity of judges and juries."[12] Over many years, the young female accusers have been retrospectively diagnosed with a variety of mental illnesses, psychological conditions and sexual dysfunctions. They have been considered liars and "mentally unstable person[s],"[13] enacting "excessive antics and disturbing visions."[14] Their accusations have not even been considered their own but rather the "parroted . . . concerns of other Essex County residents."[15] Lastly, the writing about them has been particularly lurid. Pride of place goes to Arthur Miller, author of *The Crucible*, who in 1989 described the "ravings of a klatch of repressed pubescent girls who, fearing punishment for their implicitly sexual revolt, began convincing themselves that they had been perverted by Satan."[16]

There have been attempts to consider the young female accusers in their social context but generally in order to establish a basis for their dysfunctional behaviour. In 1989 Carol Karlsen drew attention to the fact that the young accusers "played *the* most dramatic roles in the events of 1692–1693, naming . . . not only the people their neighbours already assumed were witches but others never before suspected . . . Some of these previously unknown witches were people the [afflicted] had known . . . in their former Maine communities."[17] Karlsen was referring to the fact that a number of the young accusers were refugees who had fled the fighting in the north of New England, where the English fought multiple 'Indian Wars' between 1675 and 1691. In a number of cases, the young accusers had lost parents and guardians, and their family's social and economic prospects had been destroyed.[18]

Mary Beth Norton developed the connection between the 1692 trials and the Indian Wars much more thoroughly in her 2002 book *In the Devil's Snare*. Norton gives the young female accusers the most sustained consideration to date, including providing valuable biographical information. Norton's view is

12 Thomas Hutchinson cited in Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 33.

13 Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 46.

14 Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 242.

15 Ibid., 191.

16 Arthur Miller cited in Rosenthal, *Salem Story*, 33.

17 Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman*, 227. Italics in original.

18 Richard Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 182–204.

that "as in no other event in American history until the rise of the women's rights movement in the nineteenth century, women took centre stage at Salem: they were the major instigators and victims of a remarkable public spectacle." Norton credits the young accusers with considerable discursive sophistication managing the distinction between themselves and "Satan's allies, interpreting the invisible world for their fellows but simultaneously maintaining a firm distance from it." Norton emphasizes the way that the young afflicted accusers became so important to the legal process that they "encroach[ed] on the magistrates function within the public space of the courtroom." The traditional historiography, Norton argues, has focused on the accused witches, and "largely ignored the background of key accusers." Norton argues that the young female accusers are of singular importance because they "created links to the Maine frontier" thereby allowing "Essex County residents to connect their fears of neighbours long suspected of malefic acts with their newer concerns about the consequences of the Second Indian War."[19]

Norton explains this female empowerment as the by-product of the military and political circumstances of northern New England in the late seventeenth century. While Norton does believe that "[p]re-arranged collusion is probably the only explanation" for some aspects of the young accuser's behavior, she holds the masculine governors of New England responsible for the witch trials because "they attempted to shift the responsibility for their own inadequate defence of the frontier to the demons of the invisible world. . . ." Norton points to the fact that some of the young people's accusations "were rejected by male gatekeepers," and concludes that the credibility of the young accusers rested on the degree to which high status men were prepared to endorse their accusations. Such men were prepared to do so, Norton believes, because they were "invested in believing in the reputed witch's guilt, in large part because they needed to believe that they themselves were not guilty of causing New England's current woes."[20] Norton sees the necessary agency resting with these adult men, while the young accusers' contribution can be explained by pathological psychology: "the afflicted, if sufficiently mentally disturbed, could have stuck themselves with pins (or injured themselves in other ways) without conscious or rational intent."[21]

So while there is evidence that the young accusers were socially and legally empowered during the witch trials of 1692, this empowerment is generally explained away because these historical actors were young and female. Girls

19 Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*, 4, 7, 114, 147, 183, 305.

20 Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*, 176, 300.

21 Ibid., 162.

and young women in early modern Anglo-American communities, as elsewhere, have not been regarded as social, legal or cultural agents. These young accusers have been judged as mad or bad rather than evaluated as reasonable historical actors. I am interested in the possibility of constructing an analytical framework that takes these young female accusers seriously and assumes their capacity to act meaningfully and purposefully, instead of hysterically and irrationally. I am interested in what such an analysis might tell us about the agential capacities of subaltern females in late seventeenth-century New England. But also what it might tell us about the role of young women in witch trials more generally. In this essay I would like to begin the work of considering how such frameworks might be constructed.

Historians have tended to make most negative judgements about these young accusers because it is difficult to remain untouched by this evidence, even when giving it an objective reading.[22] Any analytical framework has to take into account the huge trauma these girls and young women unleashed within their community. It is quite clear from the evidence that throughout 1692 the young, female accusers made the most extreme accusations against vulnerable bewildered suspects. They accused Dorothy Good, aged just four or five, whose father wrote later that the little girl "was in prison 7 or 8 months and being chain'd in the dungeon was so hardly used and terrifyed that she hath ever since been very chargeable having little or no reason to govern herself." Dorothy's mother, Sarah Good, was executed, and Dorothy's infant sibling died in prison.[23] These accusers charged seventy-year-old Rebecca Nurse with witchcraft. During her examination, Rebecca, who may have been partially deaf, inadvertently condemned herself when "[s]he did not understand aright what was said . . ." over the noise created by the young accusers in fits in the courtroom.[24] Impossibly poignant moments occur. There is the spectacle of forty-year-old Elizabeth Proctor pleading for her life to eleven-year-old Abigail Williams. Elizabeth begged "Dear Child, it is not so. There is another judgement, dear child."[25] Other moments appear as rank fakery: Daniel Elliot told the court that he was with some of the young accusers when one "cried out" against Elizabeth Proctor. William Rayment, also present, told the girl he thought she lied: "then the garl said that she did it for sport[,] they must

22 Emily Robinson, "Touching the Void: Affective history and the impossible," *Rethinking History* 14.4 (2010): 503–20, see 504.

23 Petition of William Good for Restitution for Sarah Good, Dorothy Good, and Infant, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 871.

24 Examination of Rebecca Nurse, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 157–58.

25 Examination of Sarah Cloyce and Elizabeth Proctor, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 174.

have some sport." Such evidence obviously challenges the historian's conceptual tools—what is the status of 'truth' and 'fact' here? Given historians now generally do not accept that witchcraft was 'real', how can we believe these young accusers without endorsing what appears to be a grotesque miscarriage of justice?[26] More than that, it raises questions of how we are to assess young, female perpetrators; firstly, in order to understand their agential capacity, and secondly in order to assess their accountability, if not responsibility, for the havoc wreaked in these communities by their accusations.

But we also need to acknowledge that, despite the modern response to the evidence of the 1692 trials, the inescapable fact is that these young accusers were deeply convincing to many in their community—the educated men who made up the judiciary and clergy, and the many neighbours and townspeople who came forward to support their accusations. Their physical articulation of bewitchment—usually in the form of extensive 'fits' in the courtroom—shook the confidence of the accused in their own innocence, and was profoundly credible to ministers, magistrates and ordinary folk. This is altogether remarkable for historical actors that modern historians regard as being without public power and the capacity to influence events. Historians have largely avoided the need to examine this tension by emphasising auxiliary psychological conditions amongst the girls and young women who accused so many during the trials. The historiography of Salem is, in effect, a series of studies in which the young female accusers are portrayed as active but not as shaping the action. They are represented as diabolic lightning rods: conducting accusations and suspicions formulated by others, often masculine others. Their agency is disabled, thus avoiding the question of how they became such "decisive shapers" of the Salem trials.[27]

Historians have yet to explore cultural historical approaches to the 1692 trials. While the social, economic, geopolitical, religious and legal context of witch trials tells us how witch trials occurred, only by examining the cultures of belief that supported witchcraft accusations can we understand why witch trials occurred. The focus on the material context of the trials can only lead to the conclusion that the young female accusers were mentally ill or fraudulent because these are the only explanations possible in models that do not permit the material effects of believing in witches. Only by accepting the cultural context of the 1692 trials is it possible to see that these girls and young women were not behaving in an irrational or random fashion. To see their behaviour

26 Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Germany* (London: Routledge, 1994), 126.

27 See note 8, above.

not as the result of individual pathology but evidence of authentically-held cultural beliefs. By the late seventeenth century there was over a century of examples from England and New England of girls and young women behaving in a similar fashion. This behaviour should not be conflated with demonic possession, as has often been the case.[28] But like demonic possession, in England and New England, affliction caused by the agency of a witch was the particular province of a specific demographic: girls and teenage women from middling status godly homes—girls and young women very like the Salem accusers. So in 1593 in England, girls and young women in the Throckmorton household in Warboys, Huntingdonshire, accused three members of the Samuel family of witchcraft after becoming afflicted by symptoms very similar to those of the Salem accusers, but which had persisted over several years. In 1662 the famous jurist Matthew Hale presided over a witch trial in Lowestoft, Suffolk, involving charges made by young girls who suffered afflictions, also like those of the Salem accusers, who accused two local women of bewitching them. Historians of that event have claimed that the "case against Amy Denny and Rose Cullender strongly influenced the . . . Salem trials of 1692."[29] In both these cases all the suspects were executed as witches.[30] In early New England, there was the famous example of Boston's Goodwin children who, in 1688, accused an Irish washerwoman, Mary Glover, of afflicting them. Mary was also executed.[31]

Both the symptoms of bewitchment, and the diagnoses of witchcraft as the cause, were widely accepted in early modern English communities. Norton asserts that the young accusers' behaviour "showed their familiarity with earlier bewitchment stories" of the "Goodwin and Lowestoft afflicted" and they "consciously or unconsciously . . . incorporated the previously recorded behaviour into their own repertoires."[32] My argument is that they certainly were familiar with stories of bewitchment but not necessarily because they had read the published accounts and sought to imitate them. Rather, in this

28 Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of A Woman*, 241–42.

29 Gilbert Geis and Ivan Bunn, *A Trial of Witches: A Seventeenth-Century Witchcraft Prosecution* (London: Routledge, 1997), 7, 35–77; Philip C. Almond, *The Witches of Warboys: An Extraordinary Story of Sorcery, Sadism and Satanic Possession* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2008), 29–30.

30 J. A. Sharpe, "Disruption in the Well-Ordered Household: Age, Authority, and Possessed Young People," in *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*, (eds.) Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox and Steve Hindle (London: MacMillan, 1996): 187–212.

31 Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman*, 33–35, David D. Hall, *Witch-Hunting in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Documentary History 1638–1693* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999 edition): 265–79.

32 Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*, 52–54.

society, at this time, bewitchment stories were part of the cultural currency of the community. The behaviour of the young female accusers in 1692 had a cultural logic—it was how you behaved when you believed you were bewitched. In the Salem historiography, in particular, the reality of the belief in witchcraft has played second fiddle to the social historical, geopolitical and ideological contexts that have powered the explanatory models applied to the 1692 trials. Instead of discounting the accusations of the young female accusers, we might instead follow Diane Purkiss's suggestion that "careful reading" might show such accusations relying upon "a set of assumptions and tropes . . . reflecting and managing the fears and desires of women,"—in this case girls and young women living in late seventeenth-century New England.[33]

This is crucial because managing fears and desires was potentially very relevant to these young female accusers. Thirty years of witchcraft studies have demonstrated firmly that female social identification was profoundly tied up with witchcraft accusation and this can help explain why these young female accusers were so beset with terror.[34] As Karlsen, Norton and Godbeer have all pointed out, the life expectations of young Puritan women, of establishing a good marriage in a well-ordered household, of female autonomy as a wife and mother, were seriously compromised in the last decade of the seventeenth century. Some of the young accusers were refugees from the north, in service after losing their families in the Indian Wars on the northern frontier, with their economic prospects in tatters. More generally, in the original Atlantic colonies, long-term demographic changes resulted in land shortages, which increased the age at marriage, and the number of women who never married.[35] In addition there was the legal and religious uncertainty created by the revocation of the Massachusetts Bay Charter and the assertion of English royal authority through a Royal Governor and the Dominion of New England, which was eventually overthrown in 1689. At this point the Second Indian War broke out, and in late 1690 a small pox epidemic raged throughout the region. 1691 saw widespread Indian attacks throughout Massachusetts, when previously the fighting had been confined to the north. The damage to the colonial economy, as well as the material damage in terms of lives, homes and communities was

33 Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth Century Representations* (London: Routledge, 1996), 91.

34 There are some teenage boys among the afflicted accusers and these cases require further consideration.

35 Philip Greven, *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), 72–125; Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of A Woman*, 229.

enormous. 1691 also saw the return of a new Charter that extended religious tolerance to Anglicans and Quakers, a move that appalled Puritan communities. Early in 1692, the witch trials began. As Godbeer observed, "[w]herever New Englanders lived during these years, they experienced fear and uncertainty."[36] Like the life prospects of all New Englanders, those of the young female accusers were severely threatened.[37] Just as this grim history may have produced mental illness or psychological disturbance in girls and young women living in New England, it can also provide evidence as to why the young female accusers could have felt witches were attacking them. And given this was a community that believed in witches, this would not be a response from pathology, but rather one based firmly in their life experience and cultural context.[38]

The young female accusers were also living within the tense inter-generational politics of colonial New England. The mighty founding generation, who fled England to establish the Kingdom of the Saints, had birthed a second generation beset with spiritual doubt, many of whom failed to experience the conversion necessary for church-membership. The second generation revered the founders with what one historian called "obsessive filiopietism" which was accompanied by the conviction that the apostasy of their descendants would be responsible for the failure of New English Puritanism.[39] "[A]las," wrote Cotton Mather, "the Children and Servants of those Old Planters must needs afford many, degenerate Plants . . . and some, especially of our young Ones, when they have got abroad from under the Restraints . . . have become extravagantly and abominably Vicious." By the 1690s, the third generation, of whom the young female accusers were part, were accustomed to hearing themselves described as apostates who had abandoned "the Interests of the Gospel, which were the errand of our Fathers in these Ends of the Earth." The "Variety of Calamity" that had befallen New England showed they were "under the Rebuke of Heaven" for their "manifold Apostasies."[40] Given this theological climate, that a group of girls and young women should come to the conclusion

36 Richard Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion*, 186.

37 Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of A Woman*, 226–31. The diminished life prospects of some of the young accusers is central to Norton's argument in *In the Devil's Snare*; for two examples, see 48–49, 70 (Mercy Lewis), 159–60 (Sarah Churchill).

38 Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion*, 197.

39 Robert Pope, "New England versus the New England Mind: The Myth of Declension," *Journal of Social History* 3.2 (1969): 95–108, see 107.

40 Cotton Mather, *Wonders of the Invisible World: Being An Account of The Tryals of Several Witches Lately Executed in New-England* (London: n.p., 1693), 6.

they were being attacked by the Devil's agents arises from cultural context, not individual pathology.

One of the central, negative impressions that arise from reading the records of the 1692 trials is the collective nature of the young female accusers' behaviour. The surviving documents describe the young accusers repeating the same accusations again and again, with multiple repetitions of exact phrases, accompanied by identical physical actions, such as falling into 'fits.' The reader is left with a vivid impression of a mass mentality, coordinated and conspiratorial in action and purpose. However, one of the achievements of the researches for *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt* has been the careful analysis of handwriting. A key finding was the extent of the role of Thomas Putnam as a court recorder in employing formulaic phrasing when recording accusations, which was not the case with other court recorders.[41] The repetitive phrasing was not necessarily representative of the actual speech of the young accusers. We cannot accept on face value that the evidence credited to the young female accusers is truly representative of their personalities and motivations.[42]

This apparent formulism has contributed to the assessment, over several centuries, that the young female accusers' behaviour was fraudulent. But in general such arguments have not been pursued to their logical conclusion—that if the young female accusers were fraudulent, then those who testified against, tried, convicted and executed witches on the basis of their accusations were either massively culpable or hugely gullible. And amongst these would number members of the intellectual, political and religious elite of the Puritan colonies. Bernard Rosenthal's recent account of Thomas Putnam can provide an example of the type of ambiguities that emerge. With regards to the young female accusers, Rosenthal writes that "evidence of fraud is frequent in the record." But Rosenthal's treatment of Thomas Putnam, court recorder of these evident frauds, is strangely equivocal: "A more complex matter as to the question of fraud concerns the role of Thomas Putnam in preparing depositions. . . ." Rosenthal noted that Thomas Putnam recorded more depositions than any other recorder, and that cases where he was recorder had a greater success rate in being found *billa vera*—that is a grand jury finding the charge of witchcraft to be supported by the evidence. However despite this, Rosenthal concludes that we should not infer from this "skill . . . that there was anything fraudulent in [Putnam's] presentations."[43] I find this disingenuous. If the young female accusers are to be regarded as having committed fraud, then there are

41 Rosenthal, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 30–31.

42 Purkiss, *The Witch in History*, 91–92.

43 Rosenthal, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 30–31.

implications for Putnam's meticulous recording of them. Historians would need to consider that Thomas Putnam knowingly recorded fraudulent testimony, in which case Enders A. Robinson's theories of conspiracy might not be so off the mark.[44] Or else that Putnam was unable to penetrate the young accusers' deceptions. In this case, then, there would seem to be a case for considering the young female accusers as central actors exercising effective agency, able to manipulate their social and gender superiors and set the pace of the 1692 trials.

Either way, it does not seem useful to continue to use gender and youth to quarantine the young female accusers as a different category of accuser and maintain the fiction that they were not "decisive shapers" of the 1692 trials. Witch trials were a corporate activity. The young accusers were part of an accusing community, which included their adult supporters, non-afflicted accusers and other witnesses, spectators, judges, juries and clergy. The young accusers were crucial to establishing the script, but they were also caught in its logic. I suggest that the evolution of the witch hunt, the unfolding of events day to day, and the management of their credibility within this dynamic tale of witchcraft affliction, required a great deal of perspicacity on the part of the young accusers. The acuteness of perception required to manage the plots and subplots, competing agendas and emotional investments of the many players in this theatre of witchcraft required a level of sophistication, both social and discursive, that needs to be explored.[45] Considerable social, cultural, psychological and emotional skills were required by these young people to maintain their credibility. If we grant the young female accusers the capacity to act meaningfully, to influence people and events around them, we can begin to appreciate the complexities of the balancing act they undertook in negotiating the competing desires of the community. The young accusers managed their accusatory identities with reference to folklore, religion, law, popular culture and local histories of suspicions. The afflicted young accusers did not just "[turn] snatches of gossip into formal accusations, and rumour-mongering in various Essex County towns [into] witchcraft charges."[46] Rather the young female accusers managed the accusatory process with reference to their own desires, but also with careful reference to the desires and disputes of important adults, weaving them into accusations that referenced suspicions held from before they were

44 Enders A. Robinson, *The Devil Discovered: Salem Witchcraft 1692* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1991): 102–30.

45 This and other themes are explored in E. J. Kent, *The Cultural Work of Witchcraft: Salem, 1692* (forthcoming).

46 Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*, 114.

born. In their accusations, the young female accusers brought together their community's past and present, history and fiction, law and popular culture to construct extremely persuasive stories of witchcraft.[47]

At least part of the reason these girls and young women were so compelling as accusers was synecdochal: they were that part of the community that could be used to represent the state of the whole. By the end of the seventeenth-century, the overt, public obsession of significant sectors of the clergy and the magistracy with New England's fall from grace and abandonment by God created a culture where the prospect of fatherless orphans tormented by satanic agents was not just plausible, but profoundly compelling. The young female accusers enacted a public theatre of diabolic intrusion and resistance, of temptation and redemption, of damnation and regeneration. As Deodat Lawson expressed it in his sermon on March 24, 1692, "Remember them that suffer Adversity, as being your selves also in the Body . . . being of the same mould; in the same mortal and frail Estate; and therefor liable to the same Affliction."[48] As opposed to being malevolent, secular agents, these girls and young women enacted the terrible, bodily price paid for a communal failure of faith.

In believing in witches and bewitchment, the young female accusers of the 1692 trials were participating in a community of belief shared by the majority of their fellows, including the high-status men who governed their community. If we do as Erik Midelfort has recently suggested and look beyond the historiographical "legends of panic" that have arisen around witch trials, we can then see that the fear of witches, and hence their prosecution, was reasonable. Certainly "witchcraft seemed rational and sensible three or four hundred years ago because it was part of a learned and rational world view,"[49] but also because it was part of rational plebeian world view. While accounts of the Salem trials, both historical and popular, have emphasized hysterical panic the chaos did not "change the orderly, bureaucratic handling of cases," and there is no evidence of a "judicial system out of control or a society submerged in a state of panic. . . ."[50] In 1692 then, witch hunting was a reasonable activity, rationally pursued.[51] If so, then we need to extend the capacity for reasonable action to

47 Stuart Clark, Introduction, in *Languages of Witchcraft: Narrative, Ideology and Meaning in Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2001), 1–18, see 12.

48 Deodat Lawson, *Christ's Fidelity the Only Shield Against Satan's Malignity* (Boston: B. Harris, 1693), 69.

49 H. C. Erik Midelfort, "Witch Craze? Beyond the Legends of Panic," *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 6.1 (2011): 11–33, see 11, 19–20, 20–21, 24.

50 Rosenthal, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 22.

51 Latner, "The Long and the Short of Salem Witchcraft," 149.

all participants, not just those that suit the traditional definitions of 'rational actor'—namely the high-status European men. Conversely it also means that the reasonableness of the traditional rational actor could encompass aspects we now regard as irrational, such as belief in the actuality of witchcraft. So my answer to Rosenthal's "challenge for those rejecting fraud as an explanation" is, indeed, to "offer an evidence-based alternative."[52] I would offer the mass of legal, medical, theological and cultural evidence, from across early modern European societies and their colonies, which shows people from all walks of life really did believe in witches and witchcraft.[53]

Ultimately, scholars will need to make their own assessment of the "evidence for fraud in the record." However even fraudulent acts might not be understood as fraud in their context. The accusing community's cultural knowledge led them to expect afflicted victims, with pins in their flesh, suffering torments, as the evidence that witches were at a work. So it is no real surprise then, that the young female accusers, as afflicted victims of witches, realised the accusing community's belief in witchcraft and their expectation that certain proofs would be available. This will not satisfy those committed to the "centrality of fraud among the main accusers,"[54] but if the fraud argument does gain precedence there will need to be a full exploration of the implication of this for all the actors and their actions, in the accusing community in New England in 1692, but also for the entire early modern world of witchcraft believers. The 1692 trials were only possible because an accusing community reached a consensus regarding the actuality of witchcraft in their community. This consensus was fleeting and unstable, hovering between the "real and the unreal," it was "many sided and elusive, even inchoate; something that historical agents . . . could not always understand or express."[55] Perhaps the most important work lies, as Bernard Rosenthal himself observed, not in "explaining the 'fits' of the 'afflicted' . . . but in explaining the response to them."[56] The young female accusers harnessed the "considerable emotional, social and ideological energies" of witch beliefs and focused the accusing community on particular people.[57] That they were able to do this so effectively does not square with our

52 Rosenthal, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 26.

53 Midelfort, "Witch Craze," 20.

54 See note 11, above.

55 Clark, Introduction, 6–7.

56 Rosenthal, *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, 27.

57 Peter Lake and Michael Questier, "Agency, Appropriation and Rhetoric Under the Gallows: Puritans, Romanists and the State in Early Modern England," *Past and Present* 153 (1996): 64–107, 106.

current understanding of the limited agency of girls and adolescent women in early New England. To understand how girls and young women might possess such terribly effective agency we will have to unpick some of the fundamental assumptions witchcraft historians have made about gender, witchcraft and power.

References

Works Published before 1800

Lawson, Deodat. 1693. *Christ's fidelity the only shield against Satan's malignity*. Boston: B. Harris.

Mather, Cotton. 1693. *Wonders of the Invisible World: Being An Account of The Tryals of Several Witches Lately Executed in New-England*. London: n.p.

Works Published after 1800

Almond, Philip C. 2008. *The Witches of Warboys: An Extraordinary Story of Sorcery, Sadism and Satanic Possession*. London: I. B. Tauris.

Boyer, Paul and Stephen Nissenbaum. 1974. *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Clark, Stuart. 2001. Introduction to *Languages of Witchcraft: Narrative, Ideology and Meaning in Early Modern Culture*, (ed.) Stuart Clark. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Geis, Gilbert and Ivan Bunn. 1997. *A Trial of Witches: A Seventeenth-Century Witchcraft Prosecution*. London: Routledge.

Godbeer, Richard. 1992. *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greven, Phillip. 1970. *Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Hall, David D. 1999. *Witch-Hunting in Seventeenth-Century New England: A Documentary History 1638–1693*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Hansen, Chadwick. 1969. *Witchcraft at Salem*. London: Hutchinson & Co.

Karlsen, Carol. 1989. *The Devil in the Shape of A Woman*. New York: Vintage.

Lake, Peter, and Michael Questier. 1996. Agency, Appropriation and Rhetoric under the Gallows: Puritans, Romanists and the State in Early Modern England. *Past and Present* 153: 64–107.

Latner, Richard. 2008. The Long and the Short of Salem Witchcraft: Chronology and Collective Violence in 1692. *Journal of Social History* 42.1: 136–56.

Midelfort, H. C. Erik. 2011. Witch Craze? Beyond the Legends of Panic. *Magic, Ritual and Witchcraft* 6.1: 11–33.

Morison, Samuel Eliot. 1956. *The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England*. New York: New York University Press.

Norton, Mary Beth. 2002. *In the Devil's Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

———. 2008. Essex County Witchcraft. *William and Mary Quarterly* 65.3: 483–88.

Purkiss, Diane. 1996. *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth Century Representations*. London: Routledge.

Pope, Robert. 1969. New England versus the New England Mind: The Myth of Declension. *Journal of Social History* 3.2: 95–108.

Robinson, Emily. 2010. Touching the Void: Affective history and the impossible. *Rethinking History* 14.4: 503–20.

Robinson, Enders A. 1991. *The Devil Discovered: Salem Witchcraft 1692*. New York: Hippocrene Books.

Roper, Lyndal. 1994. *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Germany*. London: Routledge.

Rosenthal, Bernard. 1993. *Salem Story: Reading the Witch Trials of 1692*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2009. Introduction to *Records of the Salem Witch-Hunt*, (ed.) Bernard Rosenthal. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sharpe, J. A. 1996. Disruption in the Well-Ordered Household: Age, Authority, and Possessed Young People. In *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*, (eds.) Paul Griffiths, Adam Fox and Steve Hindle. London: MacMillan.

Starkey, Marion. 1963. *The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Inquiry into the Salem Witch Trials*. London: Trust Books.

CHAPTER 4

"Ringing of the Bells by Four White Spirits": Two Seventeenth-Century English Earwitness Accounts of the Supernatural in Print Culture

Dolly MacKinnon

> Bells have wide mouths and tongues, but are too weak
> Have they not help, to ring or talk or speak
> But if you move them they will mak't appear
> By speaking they'll make all the town to hear . . .[1]
>
> JOHN BUNYAN (1686)

Seventeenth-century English communities were united by, and fractured through, the purposeful resonance or silence of rural and urban parish bells. As Bishop Hugh Latimer had reflected for England a century earlier, "If all the bells in England should be rung together at a certain hour, there would be almost no place but one bell might be heard there."[2] Bells in England had rung for religious, political, and civic reasons from the medieval period onwards, demonstrating the sounds of collective religious and political allegiance, and/or defiance at the parish level of society. Therefore, John Bunyan's seventeenth-century English children's rhyme described how the early modern world understood the physical bells in church belfries that were rung by mortal men. As one contemporary observed "the bell, like a speedy messenger, runs from house to house, and ear to ear, on thy soul's errand, and begs the assistance of their prayer."[3] But what if the sounds, the ringers, or both came from

1 John Bunyan, *A Book for Boys and Girls: or Country Rhimes for Children* (London: n.p., 1686), 36.

2 Hugh Latimer, *Sermons by Hugh Latimer*, (ed.) George Elwes Corrie, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), 498.

3 Thomas Adams, "The Sinners Passing Bell", in Thomas Adams, *The Workes of Thomas Adams Being the summe of his sermons, meditations, and other divine and morall discourses. Collected and published in one intire volume. With additions of some new, and emendations of the old. The titles whereof are placed in the beginning of the booke: and a table of the principall points, in the end*, (London: Thomas Harper, 1630), 246–79: 249.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_006

beyond the realm of the living? Events that bridged the threshold between the living and the dead—a liminal space in the early modern world—were variously categorised as either signs, or heresies and superstitions. Here I focus on two seventeenth-century printed accounts of ghostly bells ringing that survive amongst the network of more extreme Protestant print culture in England and New England recounting supernatural events at Ferrybridge in Yorkshire, and Earls Colne in Essex. As Peter Marshall has concluded, the continuing process of reform in England, from the sixteenth century onwards, had meant that both the use, and interpretation, of bell sounds remained "egregious."[4] Bells, depending on the context, could be interpreted either as remnants of troubling pre-Reformation practices and superstitions, or as sounds of God's warnings. In early modern society, bell ringing therefore remained problematic, as it "shall seem to incline to superstitions."[5] During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, bell ringing retained connections with events and rituals such as All Hallow tide and All Souls day: "its association with an abrogated Catholic festival and its orientation towards the collective category of souls made it seem ideologically assertive as well as 'superstitious'."[6] The more extreme Protestants sought to silence bells altogether, and, as for superstitious ghostly bell ringing, they considered prayer to be an effective purge.

This chapter will analyse two printed examples of ghostly ringing at Earls Colne Priory, Essex in c. 1630, and the parish bells rung by four white spirits at Ferrybridge, Yorkshire in 1659.[7] The Ferrybridge example was printed in pamphlet form, while the Earls Colne example was printed in letter-form in Richard Baxter's *The Certainty of the World of Spirits* (1691). Baxter's volume was an empirical collection of first-hand testimonies collated by the godly detailing and verifying the occurrence of supernatural and ghostly events. The collection was didactic, and also intended to combat what Baxter, and others, saw as a decline in the belief of God's messages to a sinful world in the form of prodigies. For the anonymous author of the pamphlet, and Richard Baxter (1615–1691)—one of the most learned English seventeenth-century divines—these examples represented the histories of the titanic contest between god and the devil. Ghostly bells were heard as portents by the more extreme members of Protestantism, who maintained a vigilant ear, in order

4 Peter Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 128.

5 Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England*, 128–29.

6 Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England*, 128.

7 Anon, *The Worlds Wonder* (London:, George Horton, 1659), Title page and 8; Richard Baxter, *The Certainty of the World of Spirits* (London: T. Parkhurst and F. Salisbury, 1691), 157.

to hear and interpret such auditory signs. What was considered superstitious by some, might, by others, be interpreted as a sign. As Keith Thomas has concluded, although "theologians drew a firm line between religion and superstition their concept of 'superstition' always had a certain elasticity about it," for "the last word always lay with the Church."[8] Theological divisions within the Church further stretched what constituted superstition. "Even if," as Richard Kieckhefer observed, "superstition does not involve appeal to demons, it may of course still be inspired by them," for "all sin is in that sense demonic: it is the result of the demons' temptation."[9] Alexandra Walsham has demonstrated that the engagement with the natural world was central to the 'Hotter sorts of providentialists', and that their interpretation of signs and wonders was a direct attempt to combat the influence of the Devil.[10] The examples for Earls Colne and Ferrybridge, therefore, are the tangible traces, in printed pamphlet, book collection, and personal accounts, that survive from the seventeenth century onwards of these interpretations. What this chapter then considers is why did these bells ring, and to whom did these apparitions appear? What messages did they hope to convey, and what aspects of an incomplete Reformation did they herald? Did the proliferation of these stories in print reflect any changes in the way witchcraft and the supernatural were interpreted in the late seventeenth-century print culture of England? Does this reflect an attempt to combat the rise in what Baxter saw as Sadducean beliefs? A "sadducee . . . denied the resurrection of the body and the existence of spirits", and as Sasha Handley has cogently argued, "Anglican ministers were among the most animated supporters of ghost stories", as they "represented visible and immediate proof of divine intervention, offering assurance of immorality and the reality of an afterlife."[11] The more staunchly Protestant men, like Baxter in England, interpreted and attributed the decline in the general belief of prodigies during the later part of the seventeenth century to a rise in what they termed Sadducean beliefs.

8 Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of* Magic (London: Penguin, 1978), 55.

9 Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 186.

10 Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), *passim*; See Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), *passim*.

11 Sasha Handley, *Visions of an Unseen World: Ghost Beliefs and Ghost Stories in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2007), 26–27; See also Gillian Bennett, "Ghost and Witch in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", *Folklore* 97:1 (1986): 3–14; Owen Davies, *The Haunted: A Social History of Ghosts* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

The Sadducees were a Jewish sect in the Bible who rejected the concept of resurrection, and denied the existence of ghosts and spirits, opting instead for the power of the written Law, over oral testimony. Men like Baxter saw the need to redress this through the compilation of first hand testimonies corroborating ghostly occurrences and supernatural events. For example, the Reverend Joseph Glanvil, a fellow of the Royal Society of London, was one of those influential thinkers who "rejected mechanical Cartesianism for its materialism" and linked those who denied the possibility of witchcraft with the ancient Jewish Sadducces, who had denied the immortality of the soul."[12] Glanvil's publication, *Saducismus Triumphatus, or Sadducism Conquered* (1681) was part of the printed dialogue on Sadducees entered into by Glanvil, Baxter and others in the second half of the seventeenth century.[13] These anti-Sadducean collections mirrored the methodology promoted and utilised by the Royal Society of London (established in 1662), where empirical information was gathered and then the findings were written up and published for public consumption. Fellows of the Royal Society of London published their findings on natural philosophy in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of London* from 1662 onwards. The anti-Sadducean testimonies of ghostly and supernatural events from the godly, mirrored the new scientific compendiums, and godly facts appeared in printed collections like Baxter's *The Certainty of the World of Spirits* (1691).

Seeing and Hearing This Titanic Struggle

Charles Zika has demonstrated for early modern Europe how the "stories of witchcraft and print came together in a significantly new way" in the sixteenth century, fuelled by the growing rates of trials that were reported in pamphlets and broadsheets that proliferated throughout rural and urban towns and villages. These works described and depicted the nature of the heinous crimes,

12 William E. Burns, *The Scientific Revolution Encyclopedia* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2001), 324. See also the discussion in Brian Levack's essay for this volume, above.

13 Joseph Glanvil, *Saducismus triumphatus: or, Full and plain evidence concerning witches and apparitions: In two parts. The first treating of their possibility, the second of their real existence.* (London: J. Collins, 1681); Richard Baxter, *Of the immortality of mans souls, and the nature of it and other spirits two discourses, one in a letter to an unknown doubter, the other in a reply to Dr Henry Moor's Animadversions on a private letter to him, which he published in his second edition of Mr. Joseph Glanvil's Sadducicmus triumphatus* (London: B. Simons, 1682).

and the horrific punishments inflicted on those convicted.[14] Religious conflict between Roman Catholics and Protestants, as well as heresy within denominations, both fuelled and provided a readership for this print culture. Witchcraft and the supernatural helped "create a new print market for sensationalistic journalism."[15] A crucial feature of these pamphlets and broadsheets was the "literary hook", prominently placed, that enticed the potential audience to purchase their own copy.[16] With the clear intent of appealing to the broadest possible market—literate and illiterate alike—graphic images, placed directly under the terrible news, summarised the key aspects of the pamphlet, or broadsheets, contents. By the late sixteenth century the titanic struggle against witchcraft was contextualized within the framework of "a broader cosmic conflict between God and the devil."[17] These images, as Zika has powerfully argued, therefore enabled "the viewers of these images" to "participate symbolically in the drama of demonic attack and divine counter-attack, and ultimately, in the rituals of conquest and purification."[18] Both the literate and illiterate gained access to the experiences recounted, and depicted, within print culture.

What I intend to do here, then, is to utilise Zika's model of the power of print and image in sixteenth-century Europe, and recast it as the power of print and auditory signs for England during the seventeenth century. Penelope Gouk's work on the early modern medical explanations for the effects of music on the spirit and soul also provides a salient example of why it was that sounds, generally, were deemed important considerations for regulating and maintaining personal physical and spiritual wellbeing. Ghostly bells sounded the warning of mortal peril, heralded a need for reflection regarding the possible causes of sin, and suggested that prayerful remedies were required to the godly parishioners within the sinful communities connected with such events.[19] As I will demonstrate by focussing on these two English printed accounts, the supernatural, in the late seventeenth-century print culture, did not have to incorporate pictorial summaries, but rather used textual accounts that were heard, either in the mind's voice of a silent reader, or in the ears of those to

14 Charles Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 179.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Penelope Gouk, "Raising Spirits and Restoring Souls: Early Modern medical Explanations for Music's Effect", in *Hearing Cultures: Essays on Sound, Listening and Modernity*, (ed.) Veit Erlmann (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004), 87–106.

whom the texts were read aloud and discussed. These texts kept alive *exempla* from before and after the English civil wars, enabling new generations of readers, and hearers of these tales, to symbolically participate with those named individuals within those stories of godly sounds triumphing over the devil. These texts were also intended to convert non-believers, the 'Sadducees', who refuted the world of spirits.[20]

William E. Burns has demonstrated that "the growing intellectual authority of natural philosophy, however did not eliminate the tradition of prodigies as divine signs or objects of wonderment", but rather the Baconian "emphasis on the systematic gathering and compilation of information" was adopted by Baxter, and others like him.[21] The aim was to create a register of such events, corroborated by multiple oral witness statements, which could be created for England, Scotland and Ireland.[22] The development of scientific societies, such as the Royal Society of London, formalised the drive to advance knowledge in the field of natural philosophy along Baconian lines, and these endeavours existed in parallel to the godly belief in prodigies. The scientific methods used by the Royal Society of London, however, greatly influenced the way the godly recorded, utilised, and printed their own evidence of supernatural findings.[23]

These stories were spread amongst the godly by word of mouth, and printed pamphlets, as well as in printed letters, marking another shift from the images of the sixteenth century to the more literate audiences of the godly household of later centuries. Seventeenth-century Protestant readers would symbolically participate in these events by reading the word, hearing the recounted stories, and, by their involvement in the retelling of these tales, adding their own voices to the intimate gatherings of the godly. One of these testimonies was sent in a letter to Richard Baxter, and formed part of Baxter's collection of empirical evidence that he later published at the end of the seventeenth century in *The Certainty of the World of Spirits* (1691). Baxter's volume circulated in England and the American colonies. His work appeared the year before the outbreak of witchcraft accusations and trials in Salem, in the American colonies, in 1692.

The example for Earls Colne appeared in a letter form. The letter was an intimate form of communication providing an earwitness account, with only one or two degrees of separation between the members of the godly community involved and the godly readership. As Natalie Zemon Davis concluded,

---

20 William E. Burns, *The Scientific Revolution Encyclopedia* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2001), 324.

21 Burns, *An Age of Wonders*, 16–17, and 88.

22 Ibid.

23 Burns, *An Age of Wonders*, 16–17: Christopher Carter, "'A Constant Prodigy?' Empirical Views of an Unordinary Nature", *The Seventeenth Century* 23.2 (2008): 265–89.

over twenty years ago, it is crucial for historians to remember that letters and their circulation are important not only because of the method they employ to tell their tales, but also because of the tales they chose to tell.[24] Therefore we must embrace, as Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb have done "the paradoxical nature of letters" precisely because they are "composed texts" for "they filter representations of lived experiences through the rhetorical forms that shape them, . . . they are embedded in the part they play in actual lives and relationships."[25] Here Sara Jayne Steen's important observation that "all texts are 'literary' in that they involve creation of personae and tones, and all texts are 'historical' in that the are shaped by a culture, as well as by an author" is useful for us in order to frame the two examples of ghostly bell ringing that form the focus of this chapter.[26] Single pamphlets, such as the 1659 printed-pamphlet, were then superseded by Baxter's extensive single volume collection that brought together, and included, many first-hand letter accounts, representing a didactic compendium from which the godly could find *exempla* for every occasion. Therefore Baxter's 1691 historical collection represented a tangible vehicle for the godly to consult, and with which to combat the machinations of the devil, for as Baxter reflected the devil could not "make us sin, without our own consent or yielding."[27] Baxter's book was a retrospective survey of the evidence intended to demonstrate the "Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits, fully evidenced by the unquestionable histories of apparitions, operations, witchcrafts, [and] voices" and was written with the express intent for the "Conviction of Sadduces & Infidels."[28] The Protestant Reformation of the landscape and, as I contend, the soundscape of worship remained incomplete, a work in progress that demanded constant vigilance, as well as individual and collective purpose.[29]

24 Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 20.

25 Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb, (eds.), *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400–1700: Form and Persuasion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 5.

26 Sara Jayne Steen, "Behind the Arras: Editing Renaissance Women's Letters", in *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts*, (ed.) W. Speed Hill (Binghampton, New York: Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1993), 229–38, see 20.

27 Baxter, *The Certainty of the World of Spirits*, preface, A6 recto.

28 Baxter, *The Certainty of the World of Spirits*, title page.

29 See Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*.

The Ongoing Reformation of Early Modern England

The waves of English Reformation had broken unevenly, in fits and starts, across the religious landscape during the sixteenth century, gaining greater momentum after the accession of Elizabeth I, as the call to complete the unfinished business of religious reform continued. As David Cressy has demonstrated, the function, and purpose, of parish bell ringing formed part of this ongoing process.[30] Through the remainder of the sixteenth, and into the seventeenth century the ongoing calls for Reformation continued to challenge the nation and test parish communities, first under the reign of James VI and I, and then during the reign of his son Charles I.[31] Parish churches, as well as their fittings and fixtures, continued to be sites of contest regarding not only church rituals, but also the ordering and functions of church spaces. By the late 1630s peace had fractured into implacable dissent, theological disagreement, and open religious warfare, the sparks of which then fuelled the three civil wars that not only consumed English parishes, but also flared with long-running repercussions across national borders. For Ralph Josselin, vicar of Earls Colne in Essex, first the Bishops War with Scotland, and then the Irish Rebellion demonstrated the inevitable path to open conflict, for "the bloudy warre in England, the originall betwixt the King and state . . . first begun to smoke Jan: 4. 1641: . . . so it smokt untill it flamed and burnt almost in all parts of the kingdome."[32] During the Protectorates of Oliver Cromwell (1653–1658) and then Richard Cromwell (1658–1659), bells were particularly abhorred, and derided as "these old Chyming chimneys of the drunken whore of *Babylon*", and indicative of "The Peoples Ideols-Temples-Steeples-Bells."[33] With the Restoration came further church strife in England, compounded, after the death of Charles II, with the repercussions of the openly Catholic reign of James VII and II, until his final flight into exile, and a Protestant victory in the form of the 1688 Glorious Revolution. The religious wars of seventeenth-century England were played out within families, parishes, and communities, within the context of the broader religious wars of early modern Europe. Within England

30 See David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989).

31 See John Craig, "Psalms, Groans and Dogwhipppers: The Soundscape of Worship in the English Parish Church, 1547–1652", in *Sacred Spaces in Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Will Coster and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 104–23.

32 Ralph Josselin, *The Diary of Ralph Josselin* (London: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1976), 648–9.

33 Anon, *The Worlds Wonder*, 1 [verso] and 8.

then, parish bells, their sounds, or silences, as David Cressy has demonstrated, formed part of this complex battleground for religious conformity, and the ongoing reformation of that religious landscape and soundscape.[34] As John Bunyan's children's rhyme also attested, bells, steeples, and the sounds that emanated from them, could also be metaphors for individual godliness: "These Bells are like the Powers of my Soul; Their Clappers to the Passions of my mind: The Ropes by which my Bells are made to tole, Are Promises (I by experience find). My Body is the Steeple, where they hang, My Graces they which do ring ev'ry Bell."[35]

The sounds of bells therefore defined the boundaries of parish communities, and their place within the nation. Jaques Attali's political economy of music, where communities define themselves by what they hear as sound, and what they dismiss as noise, lends itself to be recast as a religious economy of sound.[36] To hear and understand the power of the purposeful sounds, and silences, of parish bells, was to define the boundaries of the godly Protestant parish. Bells rung for religious purposes divided early modern communities, for the sounds of piety heard by some, were heard as the sounds of iniquity by others. For the more extreme Protestants, only the minimalistic use of bells to call parishioners to service was acceptable. As Alain Corbin has demonstrated, in another context, to hear the village bells was to know the certainty of news, for bells represented what Corbin has described as "a sort of auditory certification."[37] A parish's religious reformation could be made audible. Crucial then to our understanding of the power of bell ringing, or silence, in the seventeenth-century pamphlet and printed letter that is the focus of this chapter, is the realisation that while the Reformation in England would alter the forms of ringing, it did not silence bells and bell ringing in Protestant England. Through print culture accounts the godly sounds of bells could combat the supernatural and the devil, for as young children would read in Bunyan "If they do tole, ring out, or chime all in, They drown the tempting tinckling Voice of Vice."[38] Let us now turn to the two examples, from Essex, and Yorkshire, that demonstrate the sounds of this battle between God and the devil.

---

34 Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells.*

35 Bunyan, *A Book for Boys and Girls*, 37.

36 Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985).

37 Alain Corbin, *Village Bells: Sounds and Meaning in the Nineteenth Century in the French Countryside*, trans. Martin Thom (New York: Columbia University Press 1998), x.

38 Bunyan, *A Book for Boys and Girls*, 37.

Colne Priory Manor House, Essex, c. 1627–1630

"At Two of the Clock in the Morning there was always the sound of a great Bell tolling" in their room at "Mr. Harlakenden's house" called "Colne Priory in Essex" sometime between 1627 and 1630.[39] Harlakenden, hearing these men affirming it so, decided to settle the matter once and for all, and awaking before midnight he retired with his two servants to their sleeping quarters. There he "lay betwixt" them, and "at Two of the Clock comes the usual sound of a great Bell tolling, which put him into a Fright and Sweat, so he jogg'd his Servants; who awaking, said, *Hark*, Tom *is at his Sport*. It revived him to hear them speak."[40] That this sound was heard as diabolical is indicated by the way in which it was silenced. Thomas Shepherd, a Protestant divine, who in the company of "some other Ministers, and good People", then "spent a Night in Prayer, and had some respect to the place, Serving God, to cast out the Devil."[41] This account "I had from Mr. *Harlakenden's* own Mouth, and his Servants, Ear-witnesses, when I was upon the place", offered by Thomas Woodcocke, clergyman and tutor to the Harlakenden children, at Earls Colne.[42] Woodcocke sent his letter to Richard Baxter dated 17 July 1691, stating "I Have herein sent you those four Stories [of which the Earls Colne Bell ringing was one] I had remembrance off, when I was with you last, which I have subscribed my name to", then signed himself "Your worthless Brother and Servant in the Lord."[43] Baxter titled the letter as "Mr. Thomas Woodcocke's *Letter in relation to Witches and Apparitions: Together, with four Stories inclosed therein, all relating to the Same Subject*."[44]

St. Andrew's Church, Ferrybridge, Yorkshire, March 1659

> Between 12 and one of the Clock in the morning, the Minister, Sexton, Clerk, and some others, received an Alarm, by ringing of the Bells in the Steeple; who being somewhat astonished thereat, repaired forthwith to the Church; and going up into the Belfree, there appeared 4 visible-shapes of men; with a Candle burning, sticking against the Wall: Whereupon the Minister bade up to them saying: *In the Name of the Father, of the Son, and*

39 Baxter, *The Certainty of the World of Spirits*, 157.
40 Ibid., 157–8.
41 Ibid., 158.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid., 152 and 154.
44 Ibid., 152.

> *of the Holy Ghost:* From whence come you, what is your business? And what make you here? A Voice answered, We come to reprove you of Sin and Back-sliding. Therefore, *Repent, Repent*, Or else this present year will a great Plague and Famine, befall both People and Cattle. Upon uttering of which words, the Candle extinguished, and the four Shapes immediately vanished.[45]

These two accounts demonstrate the role that sound played in a religious economy bound by simultaneous interpretations of godliness, heresy and superstition. For the godly, sound was one of the mechanisms by which the early modern living could not only be challenged by 'popery' and unreformed practices, but also contacted by the divine. The control of sounds by the godly was, therefore, paramount, and Bunyan's rhyme made much of this: "Then, Lord! I pray thee keep my Belfry Key, Let none but Graces meddle with these Ropes: An when these naughty Boys come, say Nay, From Such Ringers of Musick there's no Hopes."[46] These ghostly sounds in Essex and Yorkshire are problematic, troubling and difficult to interpret for those who do not, or cannot, hear the central religious message. Printed renditions, such as the Earls Colne account by Richard Baxter in 1691, some sixty years after the event was said to have occurred, and the four white spirits of Ferrybridge printed in a pamphlet dated 1659, provided credible aural testimony to the veracity of these events to the godly. In print, they ensured any portents they carried were guaranteed to survive long after these events had occurred. In print, these accounts mirrored the scientific publications of the new scientific societies in England and France in that they were empirical in nature, and could be consulted again and again. In print, they avoided the vagaries and elaborations of oral transmission. In print, they could easily circulate throughout the godly communities within England, and across the Atlantic to New England. Many of those whose earwitness testimonies were recounted were known to the godly families within whose networks these texts circulated.

At Earls Colne, the pre-Reformation Priory now converted into a domestic dwelling house is the site of the supernatural event, where a bell, once real, now emits a supernatural toll. While at St. Andrew's Church, Ferrybridge, the church bells are rung by supernatural means to sound a warning, an alarm, from the church tower. These sounds are heard and interpreted by men because, in the early modern world, the senses were gendered. As Constance Classon has concluded, regarding the sensory ideologies surrounding witchcraft and

45 Anon, *The Worlds Wonder*, 8.

46 Bunyan, *A Book for Boys and Girls*, 37.

superstition, while men and women could possess all the senses, "sight, and to a lesser extent hearing" were considered masculine, while taste, touch and smell were considered particularly feminine.[47] Women could see and hear, but they were considered less reliable in interpreting these senses than men. Here the notion of the patriarchal authority figures of the village is evident, as those who are called to account by the "white spirits" in the shape of men at Ferrybridge, are the minister, sexton and clerk, while at Earls Colne it is Mr Harlakenden and his two male servants. The supernatural protagonists involved are also gendered—both the white spirits in the shape of men, and the bell referred to as "Tom"—seek to make contact with the living male authority figures within the villages by using the sound of a bell, or bells, which was the universal early modern means of mass communication. This is not just a message for one person, but also for anyone within the community should they chose to hear its sound and meaning.

In both cases the ringing occurs during the early hours of the morning. While mid-night has supernatural connotations, these are linked to relevant aspects of pre-Reformation religious practice, given the nature of the sites in which these events are said to have occurred—a parish church and a former priory. Bells pealed to call the faithful to prayer at all times of the day and night. Matins "the longest and most elaborate" of the eight Roman Catholic daily Offices was performed in the hours after midnight.[48] The Office of Matins was followed by Lauds, performed at daybreak throughout the year, occurring later in the winter months and earlier in the summer months. Bell-ringing times waxed and waned according to the seasons. At Earls Colne the popish bells of a pre-Reformation Priory continue to call their Roman Catholic congregation to prayer at two in the morning, while white spirits at Ferrybridge called and spoke to the Minister and church officials between twelve am and one am, urging them to mend the ways of their parish community. The trappings of an unfinished Reformation remained in the ears and memories of many in these congregations, and the transformation of this process into a contest between God and the Devil sits at the centre of these examples. The Protestantism of seventeenth-century England, for some, remained popish and corrupt from within. The significance of the bell and bells towers in medieval culture and religious life had long resonances. Medieval church bells were baptised, and their sounds were considered capable of warding off the evil of thunderstorms

47 See Constance Classen, "The Witch's Senses: Sensory Ideologies and Transgressive Femininities from the Renaissance to Modernity", in *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Cultural Reader*, (ed.) David Howes, (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 70–84.

48 Richard H. Hoppin, *Medieval Music* (W. W. Norton: London, 1978), 99.

that were thought to be the work of the Devil. The persistence of this belief in the power of bells and bell towers, although transformed into fundamentalist Protestant views, by the seventeenth century saw Richard Baxter conclude that supernatural forces must be the work of the Devil as "Lightings and thunder bolts fall more upon Churches, than upon Castles and City Stone Walls, or any such Buildings."[49] Baxter quotes a number of well-known cases including "The Church of *Anthony* in *Cornwall*, near *Plimouth*, [that] was torn by Lightening at the time of Worship, on *Whit-Sunday*, 1640. And People hurt, and ones Brains struck up to Pillar."[50] As Baxter stressed, after these accounts, "(It is in Print)."[51] The other example was that of "The Church of *Whithicombe* in *Devonshire*, near the same time" which "So was used much like."[52] Here the tangibility of this religious battle was made visible, audible, and corporeal to the godly members of those communities involved.

The Harlakenden's house at Earls Colne, Essex was a by-product of the Reformation, as it was a domestic conversion of a former monastic site built by the Monastery's founders, the de Veres, and had once been the House of the Earls of Oxford.[53] After the Reformation, the de Veres were reputed still to be Roman Catholic, and the "Tomb-House" may have been their private Roman Catholic Chapel. About the time of the ghostly bell tolling, in 1631, John Weever, antiquarian, saw a "house . . . standing at this day converted into a private dwelling place, as also the old Chappell to it, wherein are divers Monuments."[54] The manorial lands, including the former Priory, had been purchased by the Harlakendens in the late sixteenth century, and while they had reformed the parish church, the Priory remained a troubling space. The events at Earls Colne occurred at the height of Laudianism, a religious project by Archbishop William Laud to "drive for the 'beauty of holiness'" by implementing, and reinstating, a much more ritualistic form of parish worship that sat at odds with reformers.[55] As Alexandra Walsham has concluded, Laudianism centred on the belief that "the zeal of the early reformers against idolatry had carried them into a quagmire of an equally, if not even more heinous sin" and by "destroying the physical symbols of [their] superstition—statues and images, crosses and

49 Baxter, *The Certainty of the World of Spirits*, 164.

50 Ibid., 165.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., 157; F. H. Fairweather, "Colne Priory, Essex, and the Burials of the Earls of Oxford", *Archaeologia* 87, Second Series, vol. 37 (1938), 275–96.

54 Ibid.

55 Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape*, 284.

shrines—[they] were guilty of a crime that was itself drawing down divine wrath upon the land."[56] Any disasters and calamities that befell communities during the seventeenth century were interpreted by opposing theological sides to be the fault of the other. Therefore, at Earls Colne, Thomas Shepherd, a hotter sort of Protestant, who, with "some Christians having spent the night in prayer at this pace" silenced the bell for "the Noise never gave any Disturbance after."[57] Godly sounds could, and did, combat the devil, much like Bunyan's Rhyme where the sound of God resonated within the godly: "O Lord! If the poor Child might have his will, And might his meaning freely to thee tell; He never of this Musick has his fill, There's nothing to him like thy ding, dong, Bell."[58]

Shepherd remained in Earls Colne, later supported by a subscription collected by certain villagers until 1630, at which time he, and members of the Harlakenden family, migrated to the American Colonies. Shepherd had come under the eye of Archbishop Laud, and was pursued by Laud. In order to avoid persecution, Shepherd left Earls Colne in Essex and escaped to Yorkshire, where he found refuge with the godly Darley family at Buttercrambe, passing through Ferrybridge on his way. The Darleys were part of a godly network that included Nathaniel Bacon and Richard Harlakenden from Essex, Godfrey Bosevile from Warwickshire and John Alured, Sir William Boynton and Sir William Strickland of Yorkshire.[59] The ghostly bells at Ferrybridge, over twenty years later, were a divine alarm that occurred during the fall of "Tumble Down Dick", Richard Cromwell's Protectorate. In each instance, Protestant hopes were, once more, raised of attaining a complete Reformation of the national Church after all, because even though these Protestant dissenters were no longer in the ascendancy, these prodigies were understood by some to reveal that God was still with this righteous minority.[60] This minority had harboured such ambitions since the 1630s when Thomas Shepherd had briefly gathered amongst them on his journey to the American Colonies, and to his religious freedom.

There is, however, a crucial difference between the Earls Colne and Ferrybridge examples, as the latter does not name those individuals involved,

56 Ibid.

57 Essex Record Office, T/P 195/11, Holman Manuscripts "Earls Colne", 105.

58 Bunyan, *A Book for Boys and Girls*, 37.

59 David Scott, "Darley, Henry (c. 1596–1671)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online ed., May 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/66712], accessed 14 Jan. 2013.

60 See Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

instead naming only the key offices within the church and parish. Ferrybridge identified the key personnel within the parish that were crucial to any godly parish seeking to mend its ways. The Earls Colne example demonstrates the godly household and the role of the master and his servants. The individualised example of the family, and the broader example of the parish, then offered the godly examples of the many ways in which the iniquity within society might be reformed. What is more, these experiences are not sweeping experiences of entire communities, but rather the experiences found amongst certain godly elites. Finally, both accounts provide a prodigy that centres on sounds entering the ears: a bell at Earls Colne, and a bell and voice accompanied by the light of candles at Ferrybridge. As Michael Bull and Les Back have concluded "sounds are embedded with both cultural and personal meanings: sounds do not come at us merely raw."[61] To Protestant reformers, these sounds were clear and unambiguous calls to action.

The individual letters containing personal accounts and histories sent directly to Baxter, like the one from Earls Colne, ensured that the personal testimonies linking these witness testimonials with Baxter would ultimately then create an unbroken connection with each reader from within this virtual godly print culture community. The 'word' of the more extreme Protestant congregations was read, preached, spoken, heard, discussed, debated, and written. Reflecting on his own death, Richard Baxter acknowledged "how speedily shall I see the World that I have read of, and preached, and talkt and written of."[62] The ability of a conversation between the godly to mean either dialogue, or printed text, is represented by Ezekiel Rogers' letter to Lady Barrington in 1626, where "though I have more need of letters & comfort from my friends, then benefit to write, yet now so soone as I am a little recovered I long to be talking (at least in paper) with those, with whome sometime I have had sweete comunnion."[63] Thus letters, printed pamphlets and book collections were ways that these congregations kept godly discourse alive across great geographical distances. The Reverend Ralph Josselin of Earls Colne, not enamoured with Episcopalianism, and being an avid reader of prodigies, put money aside to purchase acquisitions for his personal library. In his diary he records his summation of "a booke of prodigies, the drift [of which] seems to encourage the down cast part of men, they shall up, and the Episcopal way come to

61 Michael Bull and Les Back, (eds.), *The Auditory Culture Reader* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 9.

62 Baxter, *The Certainty of the World of Spirits*, A5 recto-verso, preface.

63 Francis J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community 1610–1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994), 55.

utter ruin. . . ."[64] The stories of apparitions and witchcraft from within these communities, reprinted and recast over the seventeenth century, maintained the ongoing hopes of reform within England as well as the need for vigilance. In the American Colonies in 1692, the year after the publication of Baxter's *The Certainty of the World of Spirits*, the Salem witch trials erupted. Fourteen years after Baxter's inclusion of the ghostly bell at Colne Priory, the Earls Colne story was, once more, reprinted in a compilation, including a similar tale of ghostly bell tolling for the county of Wiltshire c.1625, in John Beaumont's *Historical, Physiological and Theological* (1705).[65]

Conclusion

Protestants understood the power of the sounds of the godly in prayer to combat the ever-present iniquities of man under the influence of the Devil. For each extreme Protestant listener, their particular religious economy of sound calibrated the ringing of bells into one of two categories: a divine warning, or superstition and heresy to be combated by godly prayer. These communities not only had to combat what they saw as superstition, they also had to contend with growing secular scientific explanations, that also challenged the very existence of the world of spirits. What is more, the two examples I discuss here reflect the currency of 'stories', and their movement between word of mouth, letters, diaries, spiritual journals, pamphlets, broadsides and books over time, within Protestant communities, in England and in the new world, that saw a need for ongoing vigilance in the face of multiple attacks on their credibility. Baxter's book, like the new scientific methods, brought together *exempla* fit for every occasion, and especially for those times when calamity might ensue from only a temporary wavering in that vigilance by the godly. Baxter's collection forms part of the continuous strand found throughout those sixteenth- and seventeen-century printed texts, including those with woodcuts, where "the exemplary and moral character" of the stories presented to their audience united like-minded people across geographic boundaries.[66] As Zika concludes, it was through *exempla* that the ongoing fear of God and obedience was instilled during the sixteenth century. The sounds of this battle were also important aspects of this contest. By the late seventeenth century,

64 Josselin, *The Diary of Ralph Josselin*, 214–482.

65 John Beaumont, *An Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcraft, and Other Magical Practices* (London: D. Browne, 1705), 183–4.

66 Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft*, 180.

Richard Baxter and others saw the increasing need to rehearse this practice through the publication of a book of *exampla*, the contents of which spanned the entire century, and was made up of personal stories, histories, as well as accounts from previously printed pamphlets. Richard Baxter's *The Certainty of the World of Spirits* (1691) was written with a clear intent: "The uses hereof I mention before the Book", in the preface are, "that the Reader may know that I write it for *Practice*, and not to please Men with Strangeness and Novelty of useless Stories."[67] These printed accounts recorded the auditory battle between the Devil and God, and were grounded in early modern experiences that purposefully involved real people, places and parish offices. Only the godly could hear and interpret these auditory signs, for as Thomas Woodcocke wrote in his letter to Richard Baxter, "But who can prove an thing Rationally to them who have not so much reason as to know their own Souls? . . . The Devil hath them in too fast a Noose, for to appear to them would be to convert them from their Error."[68] But the unsolicited power of angels to combat the Devil also proved problematic in late seventeenth-century. Thomas Shepherd, in 1702 observed, that "the Doctrine of Angels has been handled by very few; and those that have done it, have done it mostly in a scholastic way; so that the plain Christian is still in the Dark about it; so that he is ready to start, when he hears some Notion relating to Angels, and suspects himself to be on the Borders of Heresie."[69] In the light of these observations, for the godly, the need for methodical understanding of the workings of the divine became even more pressing in order not only to inform the godly, but also as a means of combatting growing secularism within society. These printed stories of ghostly bells asked the readers to look at the unreformed landscape of their own parishes, and, more importantly, to listen to the soundscape of worship heard within them, to be vigilant and alert to these auditory signs, and then act, when necessary, through prayer to combat sin. When these auditory signs were interpreted correctly these bells, in Bunyan's words, "When Ringers handle them with Art and Skill, They then the ears of their Observers fill, With such brave Notes, they ting and tang so well As to outstrip all with their ding, dong, Bell."[70]

---

67 Baxter, *The Certainty of the World of Spirits*, preface, A4 recto.

68 Ibid., 152.

69 Owen Davies, "Angels in elite and popular magic, 1650–1790", in *Angels in the Early Modern World*, (eds.) Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 297–319, and especially 303.

70 Bunyan, *A Book for Boys and Girls*, 36.

References

Archival Sources

Essex Record Office, T/P 195/11, Holman Manuscripts "Earls Colne".

Works Published before 1800

Adams, Thomas. 1630.The Sinners Passing Bell. In *The Workes of Thomas Adams Being the summe of his sermons, meditations, and other divine and morall discourses. Collected and published in one intire volume. With additions of some new, and emendations of the old. The titles whereof are placed in the beginning of the booke: and a table of the principall points, in the end*, (ed.) Thomas Adams. London: Thomas Harper.

Anonymous. 1659. *The Worlds Wonder*. London: George Horton.

Baxter, Richard. 1682. *Of the immortality of mans souls, and the nature of it and other spirits two discourses, one in a letter to an unknown doubter, the other in a reply to Dr Henry Moor's Animadversions on a private letter to him, which he published in his second edition of Mr. Joseph Glanvil's Sadducicmus triumphatus.* London: B. Simons.

———. 1691. *The Certainty of the World of Spirits.* London: T. Parkhurst and F. Salisbury.

Beaumont, John. 1705. *An Historical, Physiological and Theological Treatise of Spirits, Apparitions, Witchcraft, and Other Magical Practices*. London: D. Browne.

Bunyan, John. 1686. *A Book for Boys and Girls: or Country Rhimes for Children.* London: N. P.

Glanvil, Joseph. 1681. *Saducismus triumphatus: or, Full and plain evidence concerning witches and apparitions: In two parts. The first treating of their possibility, the second of their real existence.* London: J. Collins.

The Worlds Wonder: Being a True Relation of the Strange and Dreadful Apparitions seen in the Air . . . Likewise, the Presenting of the Earth with a Mighty Thunder-Bolt, . . . As Also, the Strange and Wonderful Ringing of Bells . . . 1659. London: George Horton.

Works Published after 1800

Attali, Jacques. 1985. *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bennett, Gillian. 1986. Ghost and Witch in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. *Folklore* 97(1): 3–14.

Bremer, Francis J. 1994. *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community 1610–1692.* Boston: Northeastern University Press.

Bull, Michael and Les Back (eds.). 2003. *The Auditory Cultural Reader.* Oxford: Berg.

Burns, William E. 2001. *The Scientific Revolution Encyclopedia*. California: ABC-CLIO.

———. 2002. *An Age of Wonders: Prodigies, Politics, and Providence in England, 1657–1727*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Carter, Christopher. 2008. "A Constant Prodigy?" Empirical Views of an Unordinary Nature. *The Seventeenth Century* 23.2: 265–89.

Classen, Constance. 2005. The Witch's Senses: Sensory Ideologies and Transgressive Femininities from the Renaissance to Modernity. In *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Cultural Reader*, (ed.) David Howes, 70–84. Oxford: Berg, 2005.

Corbin, Alain. 1998. *Village Bells: Sounds and Meaning in Nineteenth Century in the French Countryside*, trans. Martin Thom. New York: Columbia University Press.

Couchman, Jane and Ann Crabb (eds.). 2005. *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400–1700: Form and Persuasion.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Craig, John. 2005. Psalms, Groans and Dogwhipppers: The Soundscape of Worship in the English Parish Church, 1547–1652. In *Sacred Spaces in Early Modern Europe*, (ed.) Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, 104–123. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cressy, David. 1989. *Bonfires & Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Davies, Owen. 2006. Angels in Elite and Popular Magic, 1650–1790. In *Angels in the Early Modern World*, (eds.) Peter Marshall and Alexandra Walsham, 297–319 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2009. *The Haunted: A Social History of Ghosts*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Davis, Natalie Zemon. *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987.

Fairweather, F. H. 1938. Colne Priory, Essex, and the Burials of the Earls of Oxford. *Archaeologia* 87, Second Series, vol. 37: 275–96.

Handley, Sasha. 2007. *Visions of an Unseen World: Ghost Beliefs in Eighteenth-Century England.* London: Pickering and Chatto.

Hoppin, Richard H. 1978. *Medieval Music.* London: W. W. Norton.

Howes, David (ed.). 2005. *Empire of the Senses: The Sensual Culture Reader.* Oxford: Berg.

Josselin, Ralph. 1976. *The Diary of Ralph Josselin 1616–1683.* London: Oxford University Press for the British Academy.

Kieckhefer, Richard. 2000. *Magic in the Middle Ages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Latimer, Hugh. 1844. *Sermons and Remains by Hugh Latimer*. (Ed.) George Elwes Corrie, vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marshall, Peter. 2002. *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Scott, David. 2004. Darley, Henry (c. 1596–1671), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Steen, Sara Jayne. 1993. Behind the Arras: Editing Renaissance Women's Letters. In *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts*, (ed.) W. Speed Hill, 229–38. Binghampton, New York: Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

Thomas, Keith. 1978. *Religion and the Decline of Magic.* London: Penguin.

Walsham, Alexandra. 1999. *Providence in Early Modern England.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2011. *Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zika, Charles. 2007. *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe*. London-New York: Routledge.

PART 2

Religion and Cultural Authority

CHAPTER 5

"It is a Great Disgrace for Our City": Archbishop Antoninus and Heresy in Renaissance Florence

Peter Howard

The trial and execution of the physician Giovanni Cani da Montecatini in May 1450 as a heretic and enchanter has received little attention in the literature on Renaissance Florence, although in the period itself it is mentioned briefly by all the major chroniclers.[1] Cani's trial was presided over by the city's Dominican archbishop, Antoninus (Antonino Pierozzi, b. 1389; archbishop 1446–1459). There is no official transcript of the trial, and the only extended account of the event that remains is incorporated into a manuscript by Baldovino Baldovini (b. 1421), the archbishop's notary.[2] An almost complete transcription was appended by Raoul Morçay to his classic biography of Saint Antoninus.[3] In his 1959 *Bibliografia Antoniniana*, Stefano Orlandi also refers to documents, currently held in the Bibilioteca Communale di Pescia, which are promisingly titled "the judgement of Saint Antoninus against the heretic Giovanni de' Cani," but this trail ends somewhat abruptly.[4] Rather than Antoninus's judgement, that material comprises nineteenth-century transcriptions of a range of sources which refer to Cani, including Baldovini, extracted from Florentine libraries and archives.[5] When these references are traced back to their original sources, however, they no longer seem to exist, apart from Baldovini's account.

1 Sozomon da Pistoia, Leonardo Morelli, Giovanni Cambi and Mattheo Palmieri. See Gustavo Uzielli, *La vita e i tempi di Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli: richerche e studi* (Rome: Auspice il Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione, 1894), 212–14.

Charles Zika introduced me to the exciting possibilities of the new historiography of late antique and early modern religion in a series of postgraduate seminars he convened at the University of Melbourne in 1985. I remain indebted to him, not only for the intellectual stimulation, but also for thirty years of friendship.

2 Biblioteca Riccardiana, Florence, cod. 1333, fols 63 recto–64 verso.

3 Raoul Morçay, *Saint Antonin, Fondateur du Couvent de Saint-Marc, Archevêque de Florence, 1389–1459* (Paris: Libraire Gabalda, 1913), 430–31.

4 "Sentenza di S. Antonino contro l'eretico Giovanni de' Cani," Stefano Orlandi O. P., *Bibliografia Antoniniana* (Vatican City: Typografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1962), 16.

5 Biblioteca Communale di Pescia, MS. Fondo Nardini, Cassetta N. 1, Fasc. 1.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_007

Moreover, even though the execution itself was a civic matter, records in the state archives of Florence have yet to be found.

Baldovini's document has been the basis for conclusions drawn by Gene Brucker that by the fifteenth century "heresy had lost much of its popular appeal, and was confined to a few intellectuals," and that Cani's "execution was a rare blemish on the city's record for intellectual and religious toleration."[6] John N. Stephen's analysis of heresy in medieval and fifteenth-century Florence, like Brucker's, draws predominantly on the transcription of Baldovini's account in Morçay. He concludes that Cani's case is "an example of the increasing doctrinal incoherence of sectarian heresy owing to persistent persecution if to no other cause . . . and Fraticelli beliefs . . . became confused with sorcery."[7] I argue, contrary to both Brucker and Stephens, that a broader array of contextual evidence indicates that both sorcery and heresy were widespread across the social spectrum in Florence in the first half of the fifteenth century. Nor was there less clarity, when compared with the previous century, about the nature of Fraticelli beliefs concerning poverty and ecclesiastical authority, and the implications of sorcery. What was feared was the union of the two.

This essay therefore aims to revisit and re-contextualize what we know of Cani's case within the broader framework of preaching in Florence from the late 1420s to 1450. Despite its reputation for precocity and a growing rationality, both linked with merchant culture and a general interest in classical antiquity, and what we know about the trial of Cani shows that Florence was subject to the ambiguities of intellectual, religious, and personal allegiances. At the same time, there was a very clear understanding of the boundaries of orthodox belief and what serious deviation from this could mean for social stability. In adopting this approach, I draw attention to Charles Zika's observation in his *The Appearance of Witchcraft* that "it was not until the fifteenth century that theologians, preachers, lawyers, judges and physicians began to elaborate a set of beliefs about the practices of potency of people called witches."[8]

The pulpit dominated religious meaning in the medieval and early modern city and offered a measure of control over the way in which different social

6 Gene A. Brucker, *Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969/1983), 207.

7 John N. Stephens, "Heresy in Medieval and Renaissance Florence," *Past and Present* 54 (1972): 25–62, at 49. See also Marvin B. Becker, "Debate: Heresy In Medieval And Renaissance Florence. A Comment," *Past and Present* 62 (1974): 153–61, and John N. Stephens, "A Rejoinder," *Past and Present* 62 (1974): 162–66.

8 Charles Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 1.

groups appropriated those meanings.[9] In what follows, Archbishop Antoninus is to the fore since, not only did he preside over Cani's trial, but also because in his writings, many of which are artefacts of his preaching, we can begin to discern the transformation into 'witches' of men and women who had traditionally specialized in magical practices related to "love and fertility, fortune telling, treasure seeking and healing."[10] This becomes particularly evident when Antoninus's later writings are compared with his earlier sermons.[11]

The Trial and Execution of Cani

The trial and execution of Cani sparked an immediate reaction in Florence. "Do not speak of it, it is a great disgrace for our city," declared a partisan of the Medici clan, Michele de Nofri Giogante, when writing that same evening to Carlo Strozzi, son of Palla Strozzi and a courtier of Pope Nicholas V.[12] That those who noticed how widespread such a view was should include those within the Archbishop's own household sets this case apart and indicates something of the ambiguities of intellectual, religious, and personal allegiances in the period: "This was not approved by any of our citizens" (*Non approbantibus id multis civibus*), observed Francesco Castiglione, the archbishop's humanist secretary.[13] His words were echoed in Italian by Baldovino Baldovini: "Non approvandosi per alcuni cittadini."[14] How was it that an archbishop who was considered to be saintly, with humanist friends, and who wrote that "in punishing heretics

9 See Zika's introduction to the fine collection of essays: *No Gods Except Me: Orthodoxy and Religious Practice in Europe, 1200–1600* (Melbourne: History Department, University of Melbourne, 1991), 2: "The religious history of Europe between the 13th and 17th centuries is characterised by constant attempts to contest religious meanings and to control ways in which different social groups appropriate those meanings for their own political and social purposes."

10 Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft*, 1.

11 Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, MS Conventi soppressi A.8.1750, Antoninus, *Sermones*. M. Michèle Mulchahey, Tomas Zahora, and I are currently preparing an edition and translation of Antoninus's sermons, *St. Antoninus of Florence. The Lenten Sermons and the Treatise on Preaching: An Edition and Translation*.

12 "Non ne parlate ch'è grande vergogna su questa terra," quoted in Uzielli, *Le vita e i tempi*, 213.

13 Francesco da Castiglione, "Vita," cols. xxii–lxxii, in Antoninus of Florence, *Sancti Antonini Archiepiscopi Florentini Ordinis Praedicatorum Summa Theologica* (Verona, 1740; repr. Graz: Akademische Druck—Universitäts Verlagsanstalt, 1959), lii.

14 Baldovini, Ricc. cod. 1333, fol. 64v.

the church, nevertheless, uses justice and mercy" should hand a heretic and sorcerer over to Florence's *podestà* for execution?[15]

Baldovini was the notary of the archbishop's household and appears to have been the official scribe for Cani's trial. His account—incorporated into his life of Archbishop Antoninus—tells how Cani, a doctor, had a reputation (*publica fama*) for his poor opinion of the articles of the Catholic faith. He was said, in addition, to be an enchanter (*incantatore*) and invoker of devils, and, along with many followers gathered in his house in the parish of San Lorenzo, professed the way of life and beliefs associated with the heresy of the Fraticelli, which is discussed below. Before the reverend fathers and masters of theology, recorded Baldovini, Cani pertinaciously declared that Nicholas V was not the true pontiff and was without authority, since he lacked the appropriate qualities. Cani is said to have denied the validity of the ordinations performed by the archbishop of Florence (by which he meant Antoninus and his predecessors) since they were linked with the Roman See. The priests thus ordained were not true priests and so could not consecrate the body of Christ. When questioned, Cani responded that he considered his own house to be a church where priests, whom he would not name but were clearly drawn from among the Fraticelli, said Mass. Pressed by his inquisitors he would not subscribe to the articles of faith. He purportedly said that he could not respond (*disse non potere respondere*). Despite lucid expositions by the archbishop's masters of theology, the witness of numerous men of faith, and pleas that he convert to bring himself back to the fold, Cani "hardened and was obstinate in his error (*indurato et pertinace nel suo errore*)." His punishment was to be a deterrent so that others might not be influenced. The judgement was therefore declared in public. A small stage was set up in front of the front door of the cathedral, and Cani was declared to be a heretic and a manifest invoker of demons. The archbishop and tribunal,

15 "In puniendo autem haereticos ecclesia utitur justitia et misericordia," Antoninus of Florence, *Sancti Antonini Archiepiscopi Florentini Ordinis Praedicatorum Summa Theologica*, part II, title XII, chapter IV, section 1, column 1157 (hereafter cited in the form, Antoninus, *Summa*, II: XII: IV, section 1, col. 1157). On Antoninus's saintliness, see *Facezie, Motti e Burle del Piovano Arlotto*, (ed.) Chiara Amerighi (Florence: Libreria Editrice Fiorentina, 1982), p. 60 ("Quello specchio di vita santa"), 226 ("Quello spirito angelico e quello specchio di santita"). Fra Antonino also used the phrase for other preachers, see Peter Howard, "The Preacher and the Holy in Renaissance Florence," in *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons*, (ed.) B. M. Kienzle (Louvain-La-Neuve: Federation Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévale, 1996), 355–70, at 361. For the instance of Antoninus burning a book as a type of exorcism, see Richard Kieckhefer, *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 5.

seated on the stage in front of a great crowd, pronounced that he must be burnt, along with his books, and his goods confiscated. He was then handed over to the podestà of Florence, Niccolò Vitelli, "to be punished according to legitimate sanction (*che lo punisse secondo le legiptime sanctioni*)."[16]

Further details, especially about Cani's beliefs, can be gleaned from other contemporary accounts. According to Ser Giovanni Cambi's narrative, which derives from rich and accurate accounts of the period 1407–1459 produced by Pagolo di Matteo Petriboni, Cani was executed because he denied the resurrection of the dead, believing instead that the soul died with the body. Here Cani appears to have been touching on the delicate question of the immortality of the soul. It was this intransigence in these beliefs that lead to his death.[17] We also glean from this chronicle that he was *un medico valentuomo, ma chattivo*—"a doctor and worthy man, but bad [on account of his beliefs]."[18] According to Baldovini's account, the books that were found in Cani's possession comprised "necromancy, chiromancy and the spells of demons" (*di nigromatia, di ciromanctia et d'incantatione di dimoni*).[19]

Baldovini therefore tells us much about the process of the trial, and its outcome. The basis of the judgement rests on accusations of heresy and sorcery. This essay, on the basis of shifts in belief about heresy and sorcery as they were inscribed into the preaching and *Summa theologica* of Archbishop Antoninus, argues that even natural magic implied a compact with the devil, and that a conventicle of Fraticelli posed both a civil and social threat.[20] The execution of Cani does not indicate increasing doctrinal incoherence through a confusion of Fraticelli beliefs and sorcery.[21] Rather, it was the perception that the

16 Baldovini, Ricc. cod. 1333, fols. 63 recto–64 verso; Morçay, *Saint Antonin*, 430–31.

17 "Giovanni de' Chani e ffu echuxato a lo' nquisitore che non credeva la resurressione de' morti; ma che il chorpo, morto l'animo; e non volendo mutarsi, fu chondannato alla morte, e in qua' hoppenione morì impichato e dipoi arso chome eretigo ch'egli era," quoted in Uzielli, *La vita e i Tempi*, 212. See J. A. Gutwirth, Introduction, *Pagolo di Matteo Petriboni-Matteo di Borgo Rinaldi, Priorista (1407–1459)*, (ed.) J. A. Gutwirth (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2001), 4–8.

18 Uzielli, *La Vita e i Tempi*, 212–13. Uzielli links Cani and Toscanelli. Toscanelli was a Paduan-trained physician, and according to Uzielli was a "collega" of Cani. From this it can be adduced that Cani would have shared Toscanelli's interest in mathematics, cartography and astronomy.

19 Baldovini, Ricc. cod. 1333, fols. 63 recto-64 verso; Morçay, *Saint Antonin*, 431.

20 I am currently preparing a broader, detailed study of this event as part of my Australian Research Council Discovery Project: "Cultures of Belief in Renaissance Florence."

21 See above, note 7.

combination of the two posed a new and greater threat that led to his trial and execution.

Heresy

In addition to its reputation for cultural, political and economic precocity, Florence was a hotbed of religious contestation.[22] Across this period the city was, after Paris and with Lyons, the most important centre for the diffusion of preaching material: model sermons, exempla, concordances of scriptural texts and other aids to the average preacher. The corollary was that the city also had a reputation for fomenting heretical groups: particularly the Cathars—dualists who rejected the flesh and the material world as evil—but also for the Beguines, Apostoli, and the Waldensians.[23] All these movements, so challenging to orthodoxy and local authority in their views of and attempts to return to the way of life of the primitive church, were giving way to the *Fraticelli* by the later fourteenth century.[24]

The term *Fraticelli* arose originally in relation to the issue of apostolic poverty amongst the Franciscans. Dissidents such as Michael Cesenas, Petrus de Corbaria, and Ioannes de Poliaco claimed that the apostle Peter and his successors were not the heads of the Church, did not have 'the power of the keys' to bind and loose in relation to sin, and that all clergy, whatever their rank, had equal authority, power and jurisdiction.[25] There were two churches: one carnal, living in luxury, and the other true and spiritual.[26] Antoninus reports how these teachings resulted in the election of an antipope and therefore schism. He details in his *Summa* that John XXII issued decretals "*in extravaganti*" directed at the "Fraticelli de paupere" and the "Fraticelli de opinione".[27] At issue was the heretical teaching that Christ, along with his disciples, possessed no property either individually or in common but used only those things which came their way by begging.

---

22 For a commentary on the social and economic origins of the rise of reason as a general mentality, see David D'Avray, *Medieval Religious Rationalities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 13–15.

23 Marvin Becker, "Florentine Politics and the Diffusion of Heresy in the Trecento: A Socio-Economic Inquiry," *Speculum* 34 (1959): 60–75.

24 Stephens, "Heresy in Medieval and Renaissance Florence," 26.

25 Antoninus, *Summa*, IV: XI: VII, section 1, coll. 595–96.

26 Ibid., coll. 596.

27 Ibid., coll. 596.

In 1427, when Antoninus was coming to prominence as a preacher and reformer, the Fraticelli were still strong in Florence. The Dominican Manfred Vercelli had come to Florence in 1419 at the behest of his superiors. There, according to a comment in the treatise he later wrote, he found Fraticelli, tolerated by an indifferent hierarchy, despite the fact that they had their own episcopacy and rejected the legitimacy of the election of Martin V and the validity of his episcopal consecrations. The leaders of the Fraticelli in Florence were being supported from outside—from the March of Ancona. Moreover, they survived only because they assumed external conformity: meeting at night, in private homes, and wearing ordinary clothes. The treatise written by Vercelli in 1425 shows that heresy was not just to be found among illiterate and lower classes, but also among great families such as the Pitti.[28]

The anxiety created by this sect may explain why it surfaces so frequently in Antoninus's *Summa theologica*, including those volumes which he was writing in the early 1450s. A section of the fourth volume devoted to this particular heresy, comments as follows:

> This plague flourished most in the March of Ancona for a long time, and [even] Florence was not free from it. This heresy still spreads, although it is much weakened. Many, obstinate in the aforementioned belief, were burnt in the year of the Lord 1449 in Fabriano and in Florence one [was burnt] in the following year.[29]

The reference to the heretic burnt in Florence in 1450 would have been taken by contemporaries to refer to Cani.

---

28 See R. Creytens, "Manfred de Verceil O. P. et son traité contre les fraticelles," *Archivum fratrum praedicatorum*, 11 (1941): 173–208, at 183. See the online *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 68: http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/manfredi-da-vercelli_(Dizionario-Biografico)/. Archbishop Antonino judged critically Vercelli, for his use of fear tactics in preaching; the Bolognese chronicle of Pietro di Mattiolo records how Vercelli sustained strong penitence by announcing the next coming of the Antichrist. For Vercelli's use of fear, see *Chroniques de Saint Antonin: Fragments Originaux du Titre XXII (1378–1459)*, (ed.) Raoul Morçay (Paris: Libraire Gabalda, 1913), 38. See also Paolo Prodi and Lorenzo Paolini, (eds), *Storia della Chiesa di Bologna*, 2 vols (Bologna: Edizioni Bolis, 1997), vol. 2, 555 and 562, n. 49.

29 Antoninus, *Summa*, IV: XI: VII, col. 596c: "Haec pestis multum viguit in Marchia Anconitana et longo tempore, nec Florentia fuit ab ea libera. Adhuc pullalat talis haerisis, etsi multum debilitata sit. Multi pertinaces in dicta opinione fuerunt combusti anno Domini 1449. Fabriani et Florentiae, et unus anno sequenti."

At the end of this section Antoninus directs the reader to his extensive treatment of Fraticelli "falsehoods" in the following chapter under the "counsel of poverty." Here he devotes fifty-one folio columns to the errors of the Fraticelli in relation to the poverty of Christ and his Apostles, rehearsing the lengthy fourteenth-century bulls of Pope John XII against them.[30] This material would have been redacted by Antoninus in the early 1450s at the latest, and so very likely reflects his preparation for Cani's trial. Moreover, Antoninus is at pains to underline the consistency of the pope's decretals by amassing arguments about what the pope can and cannot do. He affirms that whatever a pope asserts is necessarily consistent with the scriptures and with canon law.[31] Antoninus draws on Thomas Aquinas to develop the meaning of the 'power of the keys' and to affirm that the pope can confect the body of Christ and forgive sins, as well as ordain others to do the same—in short, the pope possesses the keys of knowledge and power.[32]

A feature of Antoninus's account of the heresy of the Fraticelli in his *Summa* is the language of disease he uses to describe how "the plague [of heresy] flourished." His chronicles (written in 1458, eight years after the full redaction of his *Summa*), link the incident with a discussion of the recurrent outbreaks of plague in the city, and refers to heretics infected with the leprosy of the error of the Fraticelli.[33] Antoninus, in the same breath, remarks of the Fraticelli that "for a long time there they had refuge and goodwill" (*qui ibi diu habuerant magnum receptaculum et favorem*) and it is reasonable to ask: what had changed this situation?[34] Like many of his generation, Antoninus was attuned to the new understanding of history exemplified by humanists such as Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini and Mattheo Palmieri, but also exhibited by leading citizens in the debates of government.[35] Like them, he reflected a new historical understanding that men, rather than God, make history. He had an eye for the impact of social forces, and was one of the few chroniclers and historians writing on the period of the late 1450s who perceived the implications, especially for the poor, of the varying fortunes of the city, the risk of

30 Antoninus, *Summa*, IV: XII (De dono Consilii): IV, cols. 625–676.

31 Ibid., cols. 628–29.

32 Ibid., cols. 630.

33 Antoninus, *Summa historialis*, XXX: XII, section 3 (Morçay, *Chroniques*, 83): "Ubi tunc facta inquisitione et processu contra quosdam hereticos, infectos lepra erroris Fraticellorum . . . ."

34 Ibid.

35 See Gene Brucker, *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), especially 302–18.

popular tumult, and the threat to religious and civil stability.[36] The heresy of the Fraticelli threatened the purity of the polis—a topic to which I shall return in my conclusion.

Magic in the Sermons of Antoninus

Cani, according to Baldovini, in addition to not adhering to articles of the Catholic faith, was charged with being "an enchanter" (*incantatore*) and "invoker of devils" (*invocatore de dimoni*). How the ideas informing the understanding of sorcery underwent a transformation across three decades can be charted by comparing the language and assumptions of Antoninus's preaching in 1427 with another sermon which can be dated to later than 1444 to around 1450.[37]

That the practice of and belief in magic was pervasive in Florence can be deduced from the Lenten sermon series preached there by Frater Antoninus in 1427. Like all such series, the fifty-four sermons in the collection that has been preserved in manuscript form were intended to prepare the populace for Easter confession.[38] The occasions of preaching were very public and effective preachers were those who identified particular vices current in the city. It fell to preachers, both religiously and civically, to encourage some ideas and forms of behaviour, and discourage others. Preachers regulated the civilized ethos of the city and were continuously interpreting and re-interpreting the biblical text in relation to new contexts to ensure that belief was essentially coherent and reinforced not just accepted values (pursue virtue and avoid vice), but also authority and social hierarchies.[39] Such preaching, particularly

36 See Antoninus's *Summa historialis*, MS Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, MS II.I.376, fol. 287 verso col. a for 1456; fol. 297 verso col. a for 1457: The texts have been published by Morçay, *Chroniques de Saint Antonin*, 88 for 1456, and 97–98 for 1457.

37 For the dating of the volumes of the *Summa* see Peter Howard, *Aquinas and Antoninus: A Tale of Two Summae in Renaissance Florence*, The Etienne Gilson Series 35 (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013), 19–20.

38 For a discussion of this model sermon collection, the question of language, and the 'gap' between the written text and oral delivery see Peter F. Howard, *Beyond the Written Word: Preaching and Theology in the Florence of Archbishop Antoninus* (Florence: Olschki, 1995), 127–48, 60–61.

39 See Peter Howard, "Preaching to the Mobs: Space, Ideas and Persuasion in Renaissance Florence," in *Mobs: An Interdisciplinary Inquiry*, (eds.) Nancy Van Deusen and Lenny Koff (Leiden, 2011), 203–29, at 218–19. Antoninus preached: "miserable man is never happy with his state of condition, whatever it happens to be. . . ." Quoted in Howard, *Beyond*

during Lent, was intended to bring about both individual and social change. Effective preachers were trained to be attuned to vices from which the hearers were to be shocked into eschewing. So "be converted" (*convertimini*) was often the overarching theme. The topics that were preached, the way they were framed, and the examples chosen in order to bring more abstract doctrine down to people's way of living, are indicative of social values, cultural priorities, and daily habits of the populace. They also reveal the way in which preachers brought their thinking about particular issues to bear on the state of affairs in a city as they perceived them at any given moment.

The frequent references to aspects of sorcery in the course of Antoninus's sermon series indicate that magic was very much a part of everyday Florentine cosmology in 1427. For example, during the very first week of Lent he preached a sermon on different types of curiosity. Sorcery is singled out as an example of the first type: a person seeks knowledge for adulation.[40] Magic appears as an example of the third type, which, he explains to his audience, is when one seeks to know something that one ought not to know, for example, when one will die. After citing the exemplum of the Temptations in the desert when the devil reveals to Jesus his contingent futures, Antoninus glosses the text, on the authority of Augustine, saying: the devil himself knows the truth, but that truth generally comprises evil. A further exemplum, which involved the advice of a necromancer, underscores the conviction that divination necessarily entailed some sort of commerce with the devil and would not necessarily end well.[41]

The sermon of Antoninus which, in its entirety, tackles magic in its various forms occurs in Holy Week, and so in the days immediately leading up to Easter confession. The sermon of the Tuesday of Holy Week, along with all the other sermons of the series, is concisely summed up during the Holy Saturday sermon:

> You should eschew [literally, "Be dead to" evoking the theme of the Easter cross] all superstition according to Deut. [18: 9–22]. You shall not practice augury nor observe dreams or divinations. Let go of all the enchantments,

---

the Written Word, 170. Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, MS Conventi soppressi A.8.1750, Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 3 verso col. b.

40 Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 14 verso col. b: "Fer. VIa post Iam Dom. Quadrag. Sermo de curiositate . . . Prima est quando quis quaerit scire ad finem ut sit laudatus . . . . Et ad hanc pertinet, quando quis studet scire artem nicromantiae vel fabulas vel cantilenes vel similia."

41 Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 15 recto col. a: *passim* " . . . ipse dyabolus dicat veritatem: nam etsi veritatem dicat tamen dicit eam ad malum finem ut scil. finaliter decipiat."

> magical notations, sortilege, astrology, and all the vanities of the devil and instead trust in God.[42]

The complete sermon takes up the theme of superstition and covers the key elements of magic. With a pithiness characteristic of his sermons, Antoninus sets up his discussion by capturing the dilemmas that people faced through juxtaposing two biblical texts in the proem, one in tension with the other. The biblical theme around which he contrives the sermon is: "If anyone thirst, let him come to me" (*Si quis sitit, veniat ad me*, John 7:37, *Revised Standard Version*). The opposing text is one which refers to the idolatry of God's chosen people: "They have provoked me with that which is no God, and have angered me with their vanities, and I will provoke them with that which is no people and I will vex them with a foolish nation" (Deuteronomy 32:21).[43]

This combination of texts allows Antoninus to define superstition in terms of the first commandment ("I am the Lord your God; thou shalt have no other Gods before me") as the honour and reverence due to God which, instead, is given to the devil through superstition and sortilege.[44] Then, drawing on Thomas Aquinas, he details different forms of divination, such as acting out of pride to know things which are reserved to God. People need to understand that the desire to know things that are unknown, whether in the past, present or future, is "to go to the devil" (*ideo vadunt ad dyabolum*). For the devil is always in the background when people have recourse to necromancy, prophetic dreams, soothsaying, augury, geomancy, or when judging whether a choice is good or ill by throwing dice, or interpreting the forms created by casting liquefied lead or wax into water, or reading palms, or astrology, or the chirping of birds.[45] He concludes this particular point by quoting Thomas Aquinas:

---

42 Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 58 recto col. b: "Sis mortuus omni superstitioni vixta illud deuter [18: 9–22]. Non augurabimini nec observabitis somnia, aut divinationes. Dimicte ergo omnes incantationes, brevia, sortes, dierum observationes et omnes diabolicas vanitates et in Deo confidas."

43 Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 45 verso col. a.

44 Ibid.: "Primum est superstitio: et est nomen generale per quod homo caeremonias i.e. honorem et reverentiam debitam Deo facit diabolo per superstitiones et sortilegia. Or si quis sitit, scil. verum Dei cultum et per consequens salutem suam, veniat ad me." For this reason, superstition is often listed amongst offences against the First Commandment as idolatry. See e.g. Fabrizio Conti, "Preachers and Confessors against 'Superstitions': Bernardino Busti and Sermon 16 of His Rosarium Sermonum," *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 6 (2011): 62–91 at 74 and note 56.

45 Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 45 verso col. a-46 recto col. a. See St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae, (ed.)* Thomas Gilby, Blackfriars Edition, 61 vols. (London: Eyre and Spottiswood, 1963–1975), *2a 2ae*, quaestiones 95–96; vol. 40, 36–87.

"Do not trust in the art of magic, because it is absolutely false, nor should it be used as any faith."[46]

Antoninus's sermon then moves from divination to the more ambiguous topic of medicine and magic: healing and bodily health constituted the second desire which turned people towards enchantments and superstition. Proper medicine, Antoninus reminds his audience, is effective only by way of nature.[47] Natural magic was generally associated with medicine and was not regarded as involving the invocation of diabolical forces, even though it sought to obtain the services of the celestials to encourage good health. Profane magic, by contrast, was seen to depend on the worship of demons.[48] It is aligned with pride and hints of the sin of Adam and so enters into spheres proper to God: "it is unlawful because it is mixed with vanity." He focusses on the operations of specific magical acts, and their implicit origins, not just the outcomes of the diffuse system of common magic that was part and parcel of ordinary life, clerical as well as lay.[49] Antoninus quotes Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* to the effect that all such arts of futile, damaging superstition must be scorned and avoided by Christians since they derive from a destructive compact between men and demons. Even though some people put their trust in enchantments because they seem to work, anything to do with the occult derives from the devil.

> If in such matters there is some untruthfulness or some impressed letter or skin of a foetus [*charta non nata*—unborn skin], or propitious time or

46 Aquinas, *Summa theologiae, 2a 2ae*, quaest. 96.

47 Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 46 recto cols a–b: "Secundum desiderium est sanationis corporalis: propter hoc aliqui vadunt post incantationes et superstitiones; quod est illicitum quia communiter ista habent mixtas vanitates. Et dicit Ps. Odisti omnes observantes vanitates supervacue. Et secundum Augustinum in libro de doctrina christiana et 26 qu. 2 illud: omnes huiusmodi artes nugatoriae et noxiae superstitionis ex quadam pestifera societate hominum et daemonum quasi pacta infidelis et dolosae amicitiae constituta repudiandae sunt et fugiendae a Christianis. Et nota quod quidam confidunt in talibus, quia interdum prosunt eis per experientiam. Sed dicunt doctores, quod potest esse qoud talia habeant efficaciam super his personis quibus fiunt; nam diabolus operatur per viam occultam. Licet ergo habeant efficaciam talia, tamen non est licitum ea facere, nam nec per viam naturalem habent efficaciam, quia in medicina."

48 The distinction beween profane and natural magic was one which would later be invoked by Ficino. See Christopher S. Celenza, "Late Antiquity and Florentine Platonism: The 'Post-Plotinian' Ficino," in *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy*, (eds.) Michael J. G. Allen and Valery Rees (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 96.

49 See Michael D. Bailey, "Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Later Middle Ages," *Speculum* 76 (2001): 960–90 at 965, 977–78.

> mask—all these things are illicit and false and whoever follows superstitions of this kind, if they are clearly brought about by invoking the devil, is clearly a mortal sin, unless however one did not know them to be evil and nevertheless followed them.[50]

Here Antoninus reflects a growing awareness of an intellectual framework that equated the performance of common sorcery with the pact between the devil and sorcerer that made such magic possible.

Noteworthy in this sermon is the degree of detail about the different aspects of superstition provided.[51] Antoninus in his *ars praedicandi* cautions preachers against preaching such details of sins they were condemning since the populace itself could translate into practice. Even the judicial authorities of Florence were wary of texts on "magical and mathematical prescriptions" relating to the operation of magic and sorcery "lest the populace be furnished material for committing crimes."[52] Read against the grain, the preacher's cautions to his hearers—to eschew augury, dreams and divinations, enchantments, magical notations, sortilege, astrology, as the vanities of the devil—are themselves evidence of just how widespread the phenomenon was. In these 1427 sermons magic is an ambiguous category that could be directed to either beneficial or harmful ends, and could be absolved as part of the discipline of the sacrament of penance, which was integral to the observance of Lent. It did not lead necessarily to a trial and public execution.

The distinction between the 'sin and the sinner' is the premise of a later sermon of Antoninus, preached after 1444 and possibly in the early 1450s. The text is embedded in his *Summa theologica* as a separate chapter (chapter eleven)

---

50 Antoninus, *Sermones*, fol. 46 recto col. b: "Et nota quod quidam confidunt in talibus, quia interdum prosunt eis per experientiam. Sed dicunt doctores, quod potest esse qoud talia habeant efficaciam super his personis quibus fiunt; nam diabolus dyabolus operatur per viam occultam. Licet ergo habeant efficaciam talia, tamen non est licitum ea facere, nam nec per viam naturalem habent efficaciam, quia in medicina fieret mentio de eis, nec per virtutem divinam, quia Deus non est auctor malorum. Si ergo habent efficaciam procedit ex operatione diabolica. Et si in talibus est aliqua vanitas vel character, vel charta non nata, vel in tempore vel in persona haec omnia sunt illicita et vana et qui sequitur huiusmodi superstitiones, si sit manifesta invocatio diaboli, est manifeste peccatum mortale aliter autem non nisi sciat esse malum et tamen sequitur eas."

51 Richard Kieckhefer has observed that magic was a perennial problem and that "the condemnation of magic was one of the staple topics" of Franciscan and Dominican sermons, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 181.

52 Gene A. Brucker, "Sorcery in Early Renaissance Florence," *Studies in the Renaissance* 10 (1963): 7–24 at 18.

and entitled "De superstionibus *per modum praedicationis*"—a ploy that Antoninus utilizes throughout his *Summa*, making it the repository not just of materials useful for preachers, but providing his own integrated summation of material directed, ultimately, to a Florentine audience.[53]

Antoninus begins this sermon on superstition by confronting the psalm text "you detest those who worship false and empty gods" (Ps. 30:7) with one from the Book of Wisdom: "you love all that exists, and you do not hate anything that you have made" (Wis. 11:25). This juxtaposition allows him to assert that God does not hate man; rather God hates the sins that man brings about. He then exegetes "*odisti*" to infer the extreme gravity of the crime (*gravitas sceleris*):

> For this vice usurps the divine nature of God, undermines fidelity and works against the precepts of the church and the will of God.[54]

First: to know the future or things which are hidden belongs properly to God. To heal the sick without medicine or natural remedies is similarly proper only to God.

> But by means of superstition and the observation of auguries and divination, men seek to know the future and things which are hidden, and through enchantments and talismans (*brevia*) seek health without natural agency or the help of God. What follows is that they wish to usurp what things that are proper to God. This is pride at its most extreme.[55]

Second: this pride undermines the promise made in baptism, namely, to renounce the devil and his empty ostentation (*pompis*) by making use of such things, and in so doing, seeking the help of the devil, making a pact with him, and worshipping him when, in order to gain through things which are empty

---

53 This sermon is situated after chapters on superstition, heresy, apostasy, infidelity, and is followed by chapters on fortune, astrology and fate. For a discussion of Antoninus's characteristic practice of embedding sermons in his *Summa*, see Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, 66–72. This seems to be only part of a sermon. It has its first part (on *odisti*) with its three subdivisions; it lacks the second and third part built on *observantes* and *supervacue* respectively.

54 "Nam istud vitium Dei usurpat divinitatem, irritat fidelitatem, agit contra Dei et ecclesiae praecepta et voluntatem." Antoninus, *Summa*, II: XII: VIII, col. 1182.

55 "Sed per superstitionem & observantionem auguriorum & divinationem quaerunt homines scire futura occulta, & per incantationes & brevia quaerunt sanitatem sine medio naturale et sine Dei adjutorio. Under sequitur, quod volunt sibi usurpare quod sun propria Deo, quod est maxime superbiae." Ibid.

and false what is sought: things like health or knowledge of a particular hidden kind by going to diviners, sorcerers, or mesmeric women.[56] The third, sortilege, flows from this because God expressly forbids it, and Antoninus quotes Leviticus: "You shall not divine, nor observe dreams" (Lv. 19:26), and, following Aquinas, calls it "the greatest sacrilege."

But even this greatest sacrilege could be forgiven, but only by a bishop. It was not within the competence of ordinary clergy, as this final section of the sermon makes plain. God does not hate man, only the sin that man brings about, the sin of sorcery, and indeed of heresy. If such sin could be forgiven and did not of necessity demand the execution of the miscreant, why was Cani handed over to the civil authority to be burnt, and his ashes thrown into the river?

Conclusion: Why Cani was Executed

The most important medium informing religious culture in Florence (and other cities of Europe), from at least the time of Dante, was the sermon. The preached word could be used to tame and transform the crowd.[57] From the point of view of the communal authorities, especially in times of civic tension and discord, an effective preacher was one means of 'crisis management' (to use today's terminology); in more tranquil times he effected a form of social control. Archbishop Antoninus, for instance, emphasizes the peace engendered by preaching when writing about the skills and techniques required for its effective practice, and notes that it must pertain *in civitate inter civem et civem*—"in the city between citizen and citizen."[58] The idea being expressed here is a theological, and indeed sacramental, image of society. The observable reality of the urban polis (for it was well-understood in the period that citizens properly belonged to cities) is the mirrored reality, albeit imperfect, of the heavenly realm.[59] In another example Antoninus remarks that, whichever, the saint had

56 "Sed talibus uti et facere, est quaere auxilium diaboli, et facere pactum cum eo, eum venerari, ut per ea vana et falsa, quae facit, sibi conferat, quod quaerit, sanitatem vel notitiam alicujus rei occultae et hujusmodi . . . Non perrexit ad divinos, non vocavit magos, non aligaturum quaesivit, non impostatrices mulieres adduxit, idest incantes, non ad falsa praesidia confugit; sed reliquit mones diaboli falsitates, et venit ad Dominum jesum, ubi ostendit haec este adjutoria diaboli." Ibid.

57 Howard, "Preaching to the Mobs," at 216–19.

58 Antoninus, *Summa* III: XVIII: V, col. 1030.

59 See Howard, *Beyond the Written Word*, 197–216.

been bound intimately to God, "quia *civitas* quasi *civium* unitas"—"as when the city is as a unity of citizens."[60]

It is this theological vision of the urban community that provides an intimation of the problem that heresy, and with it sorcery, posed for those responsible for the city in the late medieval and early modern period. In the language of the accounts scattered through Antoninus's writings it posed the threat of 'contagion' to the body politic, dividing and weakening it.[61]

It is also plausible that Antoninus's views on both the heresy of the Fraticelli and sorcery were undergoing profound change between the 1427 sermons and Cani's execution in 1450. By the end of the 1420s Antoninus was spearheading religious reform in Tuscany, and therefore had an eye to circumstances in the region around Florence.[62] Moreover, this was the period when he was also part of the Eugenius IV's court (1430–1437), most likely as a judge of the Holy Roman Rota—the court to which flowed legal cases from the breadth of Christendom. In this little studied period of his life, it is likely that Antoninus's education would have continued during the "classes" (*collationes*) which were the responsibility of the pope's Master of the Sacred Palace, always a Dominican.[63] As a judge on the Holy Roman Rota, Antoninus's already detailed knowledge of canon law, canonists, and the opinions of theologians was consolidated, as is evinced by his *Summa*. It also may be supposed that he was party to changing understandings of sorcery as they were developing in Eugenius's court at the time—ideas drawing on the bulls and decrees of John XXII (Jacques Duèze, 1244–1334) on élite or profane magic; he also wrote extensively on apostolic poverty in response to the spiritual Franciscans and, importantly for this essay, the Fraticelli. The period during which Antoninus was part of the papal court coincided with the transformation of the conceptual framework of crimes of magic and the conflation of natural magic with the elite magic of the necromancer, as Michael Bailey has argued, and it is a letter of Pope Eugenius in 1437 to inquisitors that reflects this shift.[64] Eugenius laments that certain Christians have fallen away from the faith:

60 *Summa* III: XVIII: V, section II, col. 1025a (preaching related to a text for the feast of either St. Dominic or St. Augustine). The idea echoes the humanist civic ideal "with its emphasis on fraternity and equality, of willing sacrifice for the *res publica*." See. Brucker, *Civic World*, 310.

61 See below.

62 For a recent account see Luca Boschetto, *Società e cultura a Firenze al tempo del Concilio. Papa Eugenio IV tra curiali, mercanti e umanisti* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2012), 373–77.

63 Boschetto, *Società e cultura*, 371.

64 Bailey, "Sorcery to Witchcraft," 977.

> They sacrifice to demons, adore them, they expect and accept responses from them, they do homage to them, and as a sign of this they give them a written contract or some other sign binding themselves to these demons, so that, by single word, touch, or sign they might perform whatever sorcery they wish. They cure disease, provoke bad weather, and make pacts concerning other evil deeds.[65]

Natural magic about which Antoninus had preached only ten years earlier was therefore increasingly conflated with élite magic, since more and more there was the fear that the devil was involved in all magic. Antoninus's *Summa theologica*, which he began compiling ten years later to make available for love of brothers like [him]self (*amore fratrum pro me*) his "holy harvest of learning" (*ex frumentis doctrinarum*), provides an insight into his emerging cosmology and the forces that he sees being played out in the lives of his Florentine flock. It provides the best evidence of his changing understanding of the context of sorcery and its operations, and brings it implicitly, though clearly, within the realm of the first commandment and the issue of apostasy. His text was shaped by the contestation of the allegiances to be played out in public space.[66] His first chapter in his treatise on the art of preaching, which comprises an entire section of the third volume, ends with the pithy injunction: "faith is to be preached and heresies eradicated".[67] He then directs his preacher to two parts of the *Summa* which he clearly sees as fundamental:

> You will find things pertaining to the commendation of faith and its truth in part four, under the title *On faith*. Errors of the Jews, pagans, and heretics as far as preaching is concerned can be found in part two above, under the title *On faithlessness* (*De Infidelitate*).

De Infidelitate is the last section of the second volume of his *Summa theologica* and consists of eleven chapters. It begins with a discussion of superstition, because this vice, Antoninus says, constitutes the more general category and, as a manifestation of infidelity, is found even in the faithful.[68]

---

65 Cited in ibid.

66 This is the argument of my *Beyond the Written Word*.

67 "... fides praedicanda, et haereses eradicandae ...," Antoninus, *Summa*, III: XVIII: I, section III, col. 997.

68 Antoninus, *Summa*, II: XII: I, intro., col. 1133. "Demum de infidelitate agendum. Sed quia vitium superstitionis, quod est quasi quaedam protestatio infidelitatis, est communius, quod reperitur etiam in fidelibus; ideo prius de eo agendum, postea infidelitate ipsa."

This perception of superstition, which in this section encompasses both sorcery and the heresy of the Fraticelli, indicates a hardening of Antoninus's reforming zeal during his period as archbishop. Within days of his death, a humanist pope, Pius II (Aeneas Silvius Piccolommini, 1405–1464), remarked not only that it was "his theological teaching" that "stood out" (*doctrina theologica emicuit*),[69] and that "as a preacher . . . he was well-received among the people" but also that the latter was despite the fact that "he vehemently denounced their wicked deeds."[70] It is this last epithet—a vehement decrier of wicked deeds—which assumes particular weight in the context of heresy and sorcery in Renaissance Florence. This is underscored by the heading, written by way of approval, of Baldovino's account—omitted in Morçay's transcription: "How Archbishop Antoninus persecuted heretics and how Master Giovanni di Cani was clearly a heretic master."[71]

Three chapters before this sermon on superstition, Antoninus's *Summa* has a chapter on the forgiveness and substance of heresy. It includes a passage devoted to Fraticelli as an example of those "who choose such error with firm and obstinate will, and pertinaciously follow these beliefs"[72] despite being informed of their error through preaching and the written word. The argument is that obstinacy was to be judged not only by the evidence of observable behaviour, but also in the face of admonitions, and this was the key to conviction of a heretic: "In fact, he also seems stubborn, who over a long period is secretly opposed to the truth preached by the church."[73]

This was the nub of the issue in the case of Cani. As Baldovini points out, Cani was determined not to recant his views and instead "to remain obstinate in his heresy and false opinions" (*protervo et obstinato nella sua heresia et falsa oppinione*) and to be a "martyr of the devil" (*martire del diavolo*) in support

69 To remark that his theological teaching stood out and was praised does not amount to calling him "a brilliant theologian" (as one recent English rendering of Pius's Latin text would have it). See Pius II, *Commentaries*, vol. 1, (eds.) Margaret Meserve and Marcello Simonetta (Cambridge, MA and London: The I Tatti Renaissance Library, Harvard University Press, 2003), vol. 1, 320–21.

70 "Praedicator accptus in popolo qumavis scelerum insectator vehemens. . . ." Pius II, *Commentaries*, 320.

71 "Come l'Arcivescovo Antonino era persecutore delli heretici e come chiari heretico maestro Giovanni di Cani," Baldovini, Ricc. 1333, fol. 63 recto.

72 Antoninus, *Summa*, II: XII: V col. 1166: "Quod requiritur, est, ut quis talem errorem firmata voluntate et obstinata eligat, et pertinaciter sequatur opiniones."

73 Antoninus, *Summa*, II: XII: V col. 1166: ". . . immo etiam videtur ille pertinax, quia contra praedicatam in ecclesia vertatem latenter diu persistit . . ."

of them.[74] There is a further implication here. Cani was not alone in his heretical beliefs, as Baldovini's account shows. Others had gathered in his home for communion from the hands of a priest of the Fraticelli sect. As we have seen from his comments in his history of his times, his *Summa historialis*, Antoninus was acutely aware of the existence and continuing spread of the heresy. His central concern was the threat to the unity of faith posed by the refusal to acknowledge the legitimacy of orthodox ecclesiastical authority. This included not only the reigning pope, Nicholas V, but he himself and the priests whom he had ordained. The Great Western Schism and the 'Conciliabulum' of Basel still cast long shadows over Florence, and especially for someone attuned to the implications of history as was Antoninus.[75] This perception and anxiety would have been reinforced by the knowledge that Cani was not alone. His home in the parish of San Lorenzo was effectively an alternative church within the city at a time when civic unity, peace and stability could not countenance such a possibility. On the basis of Baldovini's account, and the context that can be adduced from the writings of Antoninus, it was the hardening intellectual framework in which Cani came to be embroiled, along with his intransigence, which, ultimately, led to his death.

References

Archival Sources

Biblioteca Communale di Pescia, MS. Fondo Nardini, Cassetta N. 1, Fasc. I.

Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, MS II.I.376, Antoninus, *Summa historialis*.

Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, MS Conventi soppressi A.8.1750, Antoninus, *Sermones*.

Biblioteca Riccardiana, Florence, Baldovini, Baldovino, cod. 1333.

Works Published after 1800

Antoninus of Florence. 1959. *Sancti Antonini Archiepiscopi Florentini Ordinis Praedicatorum Summa Theologica*. Verona: Augustus Caratonius, 1740. [repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Universitäts Verlagsanstalt].

———. 1913. *Chroniques de Saint Antonin: Fragments Originaux du Titre XXII (1378–1459)*. (Ed.) Raoul Morçay. Paris: Libraire Gabalda.

74 Baldovini, Ricc. cod. 1333, fols. 64 verso; Morçay, *Saint Antonin*, 431.

75 Peter Howard, "The Fear of Schism," in *Rituals, Images, and Words: The Varieties of Cultural Expression in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) F. W. Kent and Charles Zika (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 37–64.

Aquinas, St Thomas. 1963–1975. *Summa theologiae*. (Ed.) Thomas Gilby. Blackfriars Edition, 61 vols. London: Eyre and Spottiswood.

Arlotto, Piovano. 1982. *Facezie, Motti e Burle del Piovano Arlotto*. (Ed.) Chiara Amerighi. Florence: Libreria Editrice Fiorentina.

Bailey, Michael D. 2001. Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Later Middle Ages. *Speculum* 76: 960–90.

Becker, Marvin B. 1974. Debate: Heresy In Medieval And Renaissance Florence. A Comment. *Past and Present* 62: 153–61.

———. 1959. Florentine Politics and the Diffusion of Heresy in the Trecento: A Socio-Economic Inquiry. *Speculum* 34: 60–75.

Boschetto, Luca. 2012. *Società e cultura a Firenze al tempo del Concilio: Papa Eugenio IV tra curiali, mercanti e umanisti*. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.

Brucker, Gene A. 1977. *Civic World of Early Renaissance Florence*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

———. 1969–1983. *Renaissance Florence.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

———. 1963. Sorcery in Early Renaissance Florence. *Studies in the Renaissance* 10: 7–24.

Castiglione, Francesco da. 1959. Vita, In Antoninus of Florence, *Sancti Antonini Archiepiscopi Florentini Ordinis Praedicatorum Summa Theologica*. Verona: Augustus Caratonius, 1740 [repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, cols. xxii–lxxii].

Celenza, Christopher S. 2002. Late Antiquity and Florentine Platonism: The 'Post-Plotinian' Ficino. In *Marsilio Ficino: His Theology, His Philosophy, His Legacy*, (eds.) Michael J. G. Allen and Valery Rees. Leiden: Brill.

Conti, Fabrizio. 2011. Preachers and Confessors against 'Superstitions': Bernardino Busti and Sermon 16 of His Rosarium Sermonum. *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 6: 62–91.

Creytens, Raymond. 1941. Manfred de Verceil O. P. et son traité contre les fraticelles. *Archivum fratrum praedicatorum* 11: 173–208.

D'Avray, David. 2010. *Medieval Religious Rationalities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gutwirth, Jacqueline A. intro. 2001. In Pagolo di Matteo Petriboni, Matteo di Borgo Rinaldi*, Priorista* (*1407–1459*). (Ed.) Jacqueline A. Gutwirth, 1–64. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.

Howard, Peter. 2013. *Aquinas and Antoninus: A Tale of Two Summae in Renaissance Florence*. The Etienne Gilson Series 35. Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

———. 2011. Preaching to the Mobs: Space, Ideas and Persuasion in Renaissance Florence. In *Mobs: An Interdisciplinary Inquiry*, (eds.) Nancy van Deusen and Lenny Koff, 203–29. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers.

———. 2005. The Fear of Schism. In *Rituals, Images, and Words: The Varieties of Cultural Expression in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) F. W. Kent and Charles Zika, 37–64. Turnhout: Brepols.

———. 1995. *Beyond the Written Word: Preaching and Theology in the Florence of Archbishop Antoninus*. Florence: Olschki.

———. 1996. The Preacher and the Holy in Renaissance Florence. In *Models of Holiness in Medieval Sermons*, (ed.) B. M. Kienzle, 355–70. Louvain-La-Neuve: Federation Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévale.

Kieckhefer, Richard. 1997. *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century.* University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Morçay, Raoul. 1913. *Saint Antonin, Fondateur du Couvent de Saint-Marc, Archevêque de Florence, 1389–1459*. Paris: Libraire Gabalda.

Orlandi, O. P. Stefano. 1962. *Bibliografia Antoniniana*. Vatican City: Typografia Poliglotta Vaticana.

Pius II. 2003. *Commentaries*: Vol. 1, (eds.) Margaret Meserve and Marcello Simonetta. Cambridge, MA and London: The I. Tatti Renaissance Library, Harvard University Press.

Prodi, Paolo and Lorenzo Paolini (eds.). 1997. *Storia della Chiesa di Bologna*. 2 vols. Bologna: Edizioni Bolis.

Stephens, John N. 1974. A Rejoinder. *Past and Present* 62: 162–66.

———. 1972. Heresy in Medieval and Renaissance Florence. *Past and Present* 54: 25–62.

Uzielli, Gustavo. 1894. *La vita e i tempi di Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli: richerche e studi.* Rome: Auspice il Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione.

Zika, Charles. 2007. *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe.* London and New York: Routledge.

——— (ed.). 1991. *No Gods Except Me: Orthodoxy and Religious Practice in Europe, 1200–1600.* Melbourne: History Department, University of Melbourne.

CHAPTER 6

Endor and Amsterdam: The Image of Witchcraft as a Weapon in the Political Arena

Hans de Waardt

One of the many works of art Charles Zika discusses in his *The Appearance of Witchcraft* is a painting the Amsterdam artist Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen (c. 1470–c. 1533) produced in 1526: *Saul visiting the witch of Endor* (Fig. 6.1).[1] The story from 1 Samuel 28 is well known. The army of Israel was preparing for battle with the Philistines, but King Saul was afraid that the enemy would be too strong. In his despair he wanted to consult the prophet Samuel, who, however, was dead. He therefore decided to consult a cunning woman, who has become known as the 'witch of Endor', even though she was not really a witch but a necromancer. She indeed called up Samuel's ghost, who prophesied, however, that Saul would lose the battle, that he and his three sons would perish, and that royal power was to pass to David. In the context of this paper the opening lines of the story may be emphasised:

> Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city. And Saul had put away those that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land.[2]

1 Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, no. SK-A-688: oil on wood, 85.5 × 122.8 cm; see: Charles Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 156–178. On this painting, which is now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, see also Jane L. Carroll, "The Paintings of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen (1472?–1533)" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1987), 90–104; Wilhelmina C. M. Wüstefeld, " 'Clavicula Salomonis' or Occult Affairs in Amsterdam's Kalverstraat? Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen and 'Saul and the Witch of Endor' Revisited," in *Living Memoria. Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Memorial Culture in Honour of Truus van Bueren*, (ed.) Rolf de Weijert (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011), 347–64. For a colour image of this painting see https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/SK-A-668.

2 In Van Oostsanen's days the authoritative version of the Scriptures was of course the Vulgate. However, for the sake of intelligibility quotations from 1 Samuel 28 are here taken from the King James Version.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_008

FIGURE 6.1 *Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen*, Saul visiting the witch of Endor, *1526, oil on wood.* PHOTO: RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, SK-A-688.

So, the King had recently banished all magicians and soothsayers from his land but had decided to transgress his own ruling. It is no wonder then that the necromancer, knowing of his formal ban, had initially refused to help him:

> Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die?

On this the King assured her: "As the LORD liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing." To save his power Saul was willing to put aside his own decision to purge Israel from immoral and blasphemous activities. It is not strange then that Samuel, after he had indeed been conjured up, stated to the King "... the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy."

Van Oostsanen's painting shows that already in the 1520s much was known in Holland of the demonology that had developed in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In the centre it portrays the necromancer in a protective circle she has drawn around herself, and on the right side are scenes from a witches' Sabbath. It is remarkable, however, that the central tenet of the demonological theory, namely the devil's pact, is absent. Van Oostsanen

appears to have been also familiar with the work of contemporary colleagues like Hans Baldung and Albrecht Dürer. The group of witches in the lower right hand corner exemplify this. Four women of different ages are sitting together, two of them on goats, and they are preparing what seems to be a meal. One of the dishes appears to consist either of sausages or of human penises. It is more than likely that van Oostsanen took over this motif from the famous woodcut by Baldung of a witches' Sabbath. A detailed analysis of this and other motifs is provided by Zika in the sixth chapter of his *Appearance of Witchcraft*.

Although demonological elements have a prominent place in this painting, they were never of great significance in this part of the Low Countries. In the top right hand corner, for instance, there is a Wild Ride of human beings and demonic animals. Yet these aspects never played a role of importance in witchcraft cases in Holland, the province in which Amsterdam was located. In Holland proper the witches' flight figured in only one trial and this occurred much later, namely in Amsterdam in 1564.[3] The Sabbath also was of little significance in this province. This suggests that Van Oostsanen's painting was not inspired by contemporaneous prosecutions.[4] Indeed, in 1526—when this painting was made—there had as yet been no executions for witchcraft in Holland and in the trials that had been staged the new demonology had played at best a very marginal role. Admittedly, since 1519 a number of alleged witches had been burnt in nearby Utrecht but there are no indications that in Amsterdam the fear of witchcraft was already growing in the 1520s.[5] As it was, in Amsterdam the first execution of a supposed witch took place only sixteen years later, in January 1542. So why did Van Oostsanen, or the client who commissioned this painting, decide to have this subject depicted in such detail?

3 Hans de Waardt, *Toverij en samenleving: Holland 1500–1800* (Den Haag: Stichting Historische Reeks, 1991), 119.

4 For a similar conclusion regarding the witches in the prints and drawings by Dürer and Baldung, see Margaret A. Sullivan, "The Witches of Dürer and Hans Baldung Grien," *Renaissance Quarterly* 53 (2000): 333–401.

5 On the introduction and spread of witchcraft trials in the Northern Netherlands see Hans de Waardt, "Witchcraft and Wealth: The Case of the Netherlands," in *Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*, (ed.) Brian Levack (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 237–43.

Strict Catholics and Forbearing Magistrates

Much of Van Oostsanen's biography is still unclear, but the intellectual context in which he was working is well documented.[6] He was born in a village northwest of Amsterdam, but was living in Amsterdam by 1500 at the latest. There are some indications that he started out as a designer of woodcuts and only shifted to painting in a later stage of his career.[7] His first paintings were still in a rather traditional Gothic style, but in the 1520s he shifted to new motifs and stylistic elements. Although it seems that he never left the Low Countries, he was nevertheless one of the artists who introduced the Renaissance style in the Northern Netherlands.

It would not have been very difficult for him to acquaint himself with this artistic innovation. In the early sixteenth century contacts between the bustling merchant city of Amsterdam and other parts of Europe were rapidly expanding. One of Van Oostsanen's patrons was Pompeius Occo (1483–1537) a wealthy merchant who originally came from East Friesland.[8] As a young boy Pompeius had been sent for further education to his uncle Adolph Occo, who lived in Augsburg. This uncle was a prominent physician, a supporter of humanist ideals, and a close relation of the wealthy Fugger family. In 1504 Pompeius matriculated at the Faculty of Arts in Cologne, but soon broke off this study to return to Augsburg where he became a trainee at the Fugger firm. In 1511 he moved to Amsterdam where he was to supervise the firm's growing trade with Denmark. Soon he also became the representative in Amsterdam of King Christian II of Denmark and Norway, which function he held until the monarch was deposed in 1523.

---

6 To his biography see the introductory chapters in Carroll, "The Paintings of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen"; Christiane Möller, *Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen und Doen Pietersz. Studien zur Zusammenarbeit zwischen Holzschneider und Drucker im Amsterdam des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: Waxmann, 2005). Möller gives a detailed analysis of his woodcut production.

7 This point is discussed in Daantje Meeuwissen, "A 'Painter in Black and White': The Symbiotic Relationship Between the Paintings and Woodcuts of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen," in *Making and Marketing: Studies of the Painting Process in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Workshops*, (ed.) Molly Ann Faries (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 55–81. At times Van Oostsanen and at least some of his descendants also used the family name "Wer", "War", or "Warre", ibid. 75–76. Usually, however, he is referred to as Van Oostsanen. Here this custom is followed.

8 On Pompeius Occo see Otto Nübel, *Pompejus Occo, 1483 bis 1537, Fuggerfaktor in Amsterdam* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1972).

His wealth allowed Occo to assume the role of a Maecenas who patronised humanist scholars and stimulated the spread of new art forms. Between 1513 and 1518 he functioned as warden of the so-called *Heilige stede*, a busy pilgrimage site in Amsterdam. In this function he embellished the chapel with works of art, one of which was produced in 1515 by Van Oostsanen.[9] That same year Occo also commissioned from Oostsanen a triptych for his house altar portraying the Virgin and Child on the central panel and himself and his wife on the two wings.[10] In these paintings but also in many other pictures and woodcuts the artist showed his relentless support of the Catholic creed and his work can be placed in a long tradition of didactic religious art in the Low Countries.[11]

Occo not only stimulated the introduction of new art forms but also patronised humanist scholars, that is, he supported *orthodox Catholic* humanist scholars. One of them was Alardus of Amsterdam (1491–1544), an uncompromising adversary of the Reformation who in defence of the old beliefs and practices published a number of treatises.[12] One of these is a collection of texts on the Passion that appeared on 2 April 1523.[13] Pompeius Occo was the initiator and financier of the project, and Van Oostsanen produced the sixty-four woodcuts that illustrate this book. In a concerted effort the three men tried to block the growing danger of heresy.

---

9 Nübel, *Pompejus Occo*, 244–45. Only fragments of this painting have been preserved. They are now in the Amsterdam Museum.

10 Ibid., 31. This *Triptych of Pompeius Occo and his Wife Gerbrich Claesdr* is now in the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Antwerp. For a full colour image see http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jacob_Cornelisz._van_Oostzanen_-_Triptiek_van_Pompeius_Occo_en_zijn_vrouw_Gerbrich_Claesdr.JPG. The difference with the portrait of Pompeius Occo made by Van Oostsanen's son Dirck Jacobsz. in 1531 in a truly Renaissance style is striking, see for that painting, now in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/images/aria/sk/z/sk-a-3924.z.

11 Carroll, "The Paintings of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen," 49.

12 On Alardus see Bob de Graaf Bierbrauwer, *Alardus Amstelredamus (1491–1544): His Life and Works* (Amsterdam: Hertzberger, 1958); A. J. Kölker, *Alardus Aemstelredamus en Cornelius Crocus, Twee Amsterdamse priester-humanisten. Hun leven, werken en theologische opvattingen: bijdrage tot de kennis van het humanisme in Noord-Nederland in de eerste helft van de zestiende eeuw* (Nijmegen: Dekker & Van de Vegt, 1963).

13 Alardus Amstelredamus, ed., *Passio Domini nostri Iesu Christi, sive Scopus meditationis Christianae, ex optimis quibusque poetis Christianis, iisque vetustissimis concinnatus* (Amsterdam: Doen Pietersz, 1523). The woodcuts of this *Passio* were also used in a booklet on the same theme that was written in Dutch, although not by Alardus, to which sixteen more illustrations were added: *Hier begint een scoone stome passye met storie wt den bybel en Evangelien tot LXXX fighuren toe* ([Amsterdam]: Doen Pieterz, 1523).

That same day another small book by Alardus was printed. His *Rite of eating the paschal lamb. Also the ten plagues by which once Egypt has been vexed because of pharaoh's impiety* summarised the Lenten sermons he had delivered in the course of the previous weeks.[14] Van Oostsanen again took care of the illustrations, one of which is a portrait of Alardus. From the title it is clear that—according to Alardus—God was willing to punish whole nations for the defectiveness of their rulers' piety. In the text Alardus focused on the dogma of transubstantiation, the tenability of which was at that time coming under severe criticism. Traditionally the people who in this period were voicing serious doubts on this article of faith are referred to as 'Sacramentarians'.[15] But this term should be used with caution because it suggests more unity than warranted.[16] At that time they did not as yet constitute a coherent group but were a rather diffuse collection of individuals, some of whom were more influenced by Luther, others by the biblical humanism of Erasmus, and a third lot who were fostering ideas they had developed themselves.[17] According to Alardus, these heretics were like the frogs that had harassed Egypt as one of the biblical plagues. In 1523 the croaking of these animals could be heard everywhere in the Low Countries and in this case Alardus thought it was a good thing that he was a bit deaf.[18]

---

14 Alardus Amstelredamus, *Ritus edendi agni paschalis, Decem item plagae sive clades, quibus olim ob pharaonis impietatem, misere divexata est Aegyptus cum alijs non nullis eodem spectantibus, ex quibus haud obscure calamitosis huius saeculi faciem deprehendas* (Amsterdam: Doen Pietersz, 1523).

15 See in this regard for instance George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2000), 95–108.

16 Samme Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden. Geschiedenis van de dopersen in de Nederlanden, 1531–1675* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2000), 34–36.

17 For an example of how in this early period in Holland groups of people could develop their own set of heretical feelings see Hans de Waardt, "I Beg your Pardon: I am a Heretic! A Countryside Conventicle in Holland in the 1520s," in *Religious Minorities and Cultural Diversity in the Dutch Republic: Studies Presented to Piet Visser on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, (eds.) August den Hollander, Alex Noord, Mirjam van Veen and Anna Voolstra (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 29–40.

18 Alardus had indeed problems with his hearing. Erasmus, who in the beginning stage of Alardus' career had showed him some sympathy, later felt quite annoyed by him. The cause of that was probably that in 1519 Alardus had announced publicly in Leuven that he would lecture on Erasmus's theological insights. The university immediately suppressed these lectures. This plan may have embarrassed Erasmus who at that time had trouble enough with the university because of the founding of the Collegium Trilingue, which college the professors of theology perceived as a possible breeding ground of heresy, and because of the new editions and translation of the New Testament Erasmus had

The publication of these two books occurred at a rather crucial moment. That same year the official—the highest judicial officer—of the bishop of Utrecht came to Amsterdam to interrogate a number of suspected heretics.[19] The city's burgomasters thereupon issued an official proclamation against the new sects. But in practice they refrained from any effective action. From this it becomes clear what Alardus was suggesting: if the Amsterdam authorities maintained their impious policy, God could be expected to pour out his wrath upon the city. It was the laxity of the ruling clique that was the real object of this attack. Pompeius, Alardus, and Van Oostsanen conjointly pressured the city authorities to take their duty to counter the advance of heresy more seriously.

In later publications Alardus was even more outspoken. In his *Haeretici descriptio*, which was published in 1539 but was written six years earlier, he stated among many other things that heretics were worse than people who poison wells, because heretics poison souls.[20] This equalization of poisoners and heretics is indeed notable. It was not uncommon to scold witches as poisoners. The Latin word *venefica* could indeed have both these meanings. For Alardus it was heretics and not witches who were the real venomous menace.

From this it may be concluded that the real theme of Van Oostsanen's "Saul visiting the witch of Endor" was not so much witchcraft, but the perfidy of King Saul.[21] The monarch's disobedience and subsequent death were a traditional

---

published in 1516, which was also heavily disapproved by these same—still very scholastic—professors. In his colloquy "Domestica confabulatio" Erasmus has one of the protagonists ask: "And what about Alardus?" To which his conversation partner replies: "The man is a bit deaf. But the problems he is having with his ears he balances with his tongue." See Desiderius Erasmus, *Opera omnia emendatiora et auctiora*, (ed.) Jean le Clerc, 9 vols (Lugduni Batavorum: Petrus van der Aa, 1703), vol. 1, 635: "Homo minime mutus est. Quid auribus diminitum est, lingua pensat." In 1535 Erasmus made another rather negative comment on Alardus in a letter to Conradus Goclenius, professor of Latin at the Trilingue in Leuven, Desiderius Erasmus, *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, 12 vols, (ed.) H.M. Allen (Oxford: Clarendon, 1918), vol. 6, 224–5, nr. 3052. See also Kölker, *Alardus Aemstelredamus en Cornelius Crocus*, 41; *Contemporaries of Erasmus. A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*, (ed.) Peter Gerhard Bietenholz, 3 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985–1987), vol. 1, 19–21.

19 A. F. Mellink, *Amsterdam en de wederdopers in de zestiende eeuw* (Nijmegen: SUN, 1978), 12.

20 Alardus Aemstelredamus, *Haeretici descriptio* (Solingen: Johannes Soter, 1539), fol. ii verso; cf. Kölker, *Alardus Aemstelredamus en Cornelius Crocus*, 133.

21 It has been suggested that Van Oostsanen may have been inspired by accusations of witchcraft made against Sigbrit Willemsdr., a woman that had moved with her husband and children from the Low Countries to Norway where her daughter Duveke became the King's mistress in 1507. Duveke died in 1517 but her mother retained great influence on the King's policies. Sigbrit was repeatedly accused of witchcraft and it is suggested that

symbol of *Superbia*.[22] Zika points to a woodcut with the witch of Endor, Saul and Samuel that in 1572 was inserted in an edition of the Luther bible; this illustration was explicitly meant as an exhortation to the secular authorities to suppress idolatry and superstition.[23] According to the art historian Carroll, Van Oostsanen's *Witch of Endor* was meant as "a warning of God's vengeance which awaits all heretics".[24] In my view this argument should be taken one step further: it was not so much the heretics who were under attack here, but the burgomasters of Amsterdam. Like Saul, the rulers of Amsterdam had pledged themselves to defend the true religion, but instead they were betraying this holy policy. Under the pressure of the bishop's official they had issued a ban on heresy, but had not brought this ban into practice. Alardus and Van Oostsanen were warning the secular authorities of Amsterdam: just as God had brought disasters to Egypt and Israel in response to the outrages he had suffered through the Pharaoh and Saul, he could be expected to unleash his anger on the city of Amsterdam. Van Oostsanen used the imagery of witchcraft to weaken the position of the ruling administrators.

Sincere Catholics and Witchcraft

Pompeius Occo's wealth and commitment to the public welfare of Amsterdam brought him esteem and influence, but as an immigrant he could not hold any municipal office. His son Sybrant Occo (1514–1588), however, was born in Amsterdam and was therefore eligible for offices like the membership of the city council, that of alderman, or even burgomaster. In Amsterdam this latter function was the one post that brought real power. Each year four burgomasters were elected by all the men who had held that office previously with the proviso that one of the sitting burgomasters had to be elected for a second year. Sybrant was eligible, but until 1535 had little chance to win this position, as he was not a member of the ruling faction. The coterie that was running

these suspicions may have inspired Van Oostsanen. See Wüstefeld, "Clavicula Salomonis," 359–62. This is, however, not very likely. Van Oostsanen was a protégée of Pompeius Occo and Occo was the local representative of Christian II. In 1526, when Van Oostsanen made his painting, there still was a chance that Christian would regain his throne. Offending the King, even though he was deposed, by hinting on the bad reputation of his close advisor would have been rude to say the least.

22 See the *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, 8 vols, (ed.) Engelbert Kirschbaum (Rome: Herder, 1968–76), vol. 4, cols 50–1.

23 Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft*, 159–62.

24 Carroll, "The Paintings of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen," 67.

Amsterdam at that time consisted of members of two families, the Boelen and the Heijnen.[25]

But in May 1535 a splendid opportunity to change this situation came up when the Anabaptists tried to take over the town just as their brothers and sisters had done in Münster more than a year earlier. They did indeed manage to occupy the town hall, but were driven out the next day by the civic militia.[26]

The central authorities in Brussels, who for years had been annoyed by the laxity of the Boelen-Heijnen faction, now saw their chance to force this clique out of power. It still took another three years, but in 1538 the office of burgomaster came under the control of another faction that was more loyal to Brussels. The new rulers styled themselves the "sincere catholique factie" and claimed to be true defenders of the old faith.[27]

That same year Sybrant Occo returned from his studies abroad. By marriage he was related to the families that now ruled the town and he soon acquired a central role in the city's administration. He was elected burgomaster twice and several times functioned as alderman. His main function, however, was that of city treasurer.[28] He was the financial man of the new regime. The local power base of the now ruling faction remained weak, but the sincere Catholics managed to hold out as long as the central government in Brussels was strong enough to support them.

As a boy Sybrant Occo had visited the local Latin School in Amsterdam that was led by a close friend of Alardus, named Crocus.[29] In 1529 he matriculated as a student of law in Ingolstadt, two years later he went to Leuven, and in 1536 he received his degree in Bologna. In Leuven Alardus had functioned as his preceptor. After returning to his hometown he joined the new regime and in February 1541 he was appointed alderman.

---

25 S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, *Van Amsterdamse burgers tot Europese aristocraten. Hun geschiedenis en hun portretten. De Heijnen-maagschap 1400–1800* ('s-Gravenhage: Koninklijk Nederlandsch Genootschap voor Geslacht- en Wapenkunde, 2008), 29.

26 On this incident see Mellink, *Amsterdam en de Wederdopers*, 60–74.

27 As to the term "sincere Catholics" see for example James D. Tracy, *The Low Countries in the Sixteenth Century: Erasmus, Religion and Politics, Trade and Finance* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 320; Henk van Nierop, "A Tale of Two Brothers: Corporate Identity and the Revolt in the Towns of Holland," in *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World*, (eds.) Charles H. Parker and Jerry H. Bentley (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 58.

28 On Sybrant Occo's family relations and position within the administration of Amsterdam see Nübel, *Pompejus Occo*, 38; Dudok van Heel, *Van Amsterdamse burgers tot Europese aristocraten*, 74.

29 Kölker, *Alardus Aemstelredamus en Cornelius Crocus*, 30, 93–94; Nübel, *Pompejus Occo*, 37–8, 234.

In December of that year the Amsterdam bench was confronted with a sort of crime it had never dealt with before; a woman named Engel Dircxdr was indicted for witchcraft.[30] It may be assumed that Sybrant, being the son of Pompeius Occo, was familiar with the demonology that played such a central role in Van Oostsanen's 1526 painting entitled *Saul and the witch of Endor.* As a lawyer he will also have been familiar with the rules of the Justinian Code regarding witchcraft.[31] But he and his colleagues nevertheless felt puzzled about how they should proceed. Their main problem was that they did not know how a witch could be forced to confess her crimes because traditional torture techniques often failed to bring the desired result.[32] Sybrant and a colleague were sent to The Hague to ask the Court of Holland for advice. This highest juridical institution of the province was, however, unable to help them; the two aldermen were advised to consult their colleagues in Utrecht who did have the necessary experience. The two delegates returned in the company of the secretary of the city of Utrecht and a Franciscan friar, who "knew how to exorcize such people".[33] With their help Engel was brought to a confession and in January 1542 she was burnt on Dam square in Amsterdam. In the course of the following decades a number of witches were executed in Amsterdam, although a real witch-hunt never gained momentum.

These trials fitted in with the ideological stance of the sincere Catholics, but this ideological principle soon proved to be a double-edged sword. In 1547 an Amsterdam brewer named Jan Pietersz was facing serious problems.[34] He had recently bought a former oil mill with the intention of setting up business. But his beer again and again changed into a greasy, white fluid. His neighbour, who was also a brewer, had no such problems, although he used the same grain and water. Jan Pietersz was convinced that he was the victim of witchcraft and hired an expert to help him.[35] This magician did provide him with

30 On this case see De Waardt, *Toverij en samenleving*, 97–8.

31 On the legislation on witchcraft in classical times see Richard Golden, ed., *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006), s.v. "Laws on Witchcraft (Ancient)". For a list of the relevant articles from the Justinian Code see Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft*, 49, 243 note 48.

32 See de Waardt as above in note 6.

33 Amsterdam Municipal Archives, Archive 5014, inv.nr. 10 (Stadsrekening 1541), fol. 65^{v}.

34 De Waardt, *Toverij en samenleving*, 57–63.

35 The cunning man, Jacob Judoci de Rosa of Courtrai, was captured in 1548 on the request of Marie Hollesloten and convicted by the Court of Gelderland. He himself was banished. His sorcery books and a ring that held a ghost were destroyed in public. Johan Wier, then town physician of Arnhem, witnessed the execution of this sentence. See Johannes Wierus, *Witches, Devils, and Doctors in the Renaissance. Johann Weyer, De praestigiis daemonum*, (eds.) George Mora and Benjamin Kohl; trans. John Shea; forew. John Weber;

charms and similar devices, but hesitated to identify the responsible witch. He indeed had every reason for being very cautious. Marie Hollesloten, the woman that Jan Pietersz wanted him to accuse, was the mother and mother-in-law of four members of the ruling faction. She was an aunt of Jan Pietersz' wife, but she was related to the Boelen-Heijnen clan through her mother. This family had been excluded from power after 1538. Marie's husband, however, was a member of one of the families that now controlled the town. Her two sons repeatedly functioned as burgomaster and her son- in-law Sybrant Occo was the financial expert of the clique.

After 1538 Jan Pietersz was forced to give up all hope of a political career. His wife's cousins, however, were very successful in that domain. To make things worse, one of these cousins was the owner of the brewery next to his. Jan Pietersz must have felt that the ruling faction had not only destroyed his political ambitions, but was now also gnawing away his economic basis. His wife's aunt Marie was the link between him and his enemies and all his aggression focused on her.

Other members of the faction that had been ousted in 1538 now also consulted the cunning man who told them that their problems were caused by the same person who was harassing Jan Pietersz. After much wavering the magician was finally forced to support in public Jan Pietersz's suspicions after which he immediately fled the city. No alderman or burgomaster of Amsterdam was of course willing to investigate accusations against Marie Hollesloten, respectively mother and mother-in-law of several prominent members of their coterie, let alone to convict her. So she was not even formally charged. The fate of Jan Pietersz is unknown.

Almost twenty years later this history more or less repeated itself. In June 1566 a large number of orphan boys in the municipal orphanage of Amsterdam were behaving very strangely. They were allegedly possessed by demons and ran the city streets shouting all sorts of things. The crisis came when several boys climbed the tower of the Old Church from where they cried out: "We will not go from here till Bammy is standing in the fire."[36] By "Bammy" they meant Jacoba Bam, one of the two daughters of Marie Hollesloten. So, this daughter was now in her turn accused of witchcraft. Of course the aldermen and burgomasters purged her of all suspicions just as they had done twenty years earlier when her mother's name was besmirched.

---

collab. Erik Midelfort and Helen Bacon (Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1991), 484.

36 O. Dapper, *Historische beschryving der stadt Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Jacob van Meurs, 1663), 170.

But this new incident may have helped to weaken the position of the *sincere Catholics*. In 1547 Jan Pietersz was probably genuinely convinced that he was the victim of witchcraft and that his aunt by marriage was to blame. But in 1566 the orphans were definitely manipulated by opponents of the ruling faction. For instance, they divulged secret decisions of the town council almost instantly after a meeting of this body had been closed. In 1547 it had not been too difficult to silence the people who had formulated accusations against Marie Hollesloten, but in 1566 there was only a bunch of possessed and therefore half-witted orphans whom the burgomasters and aldermen could hold responsible. This all happened at a time when political tension was rapidly building up everywhere in the Habsburg Netherlands. In August of that same year a wave of iconoclasm began in the most southern part of Flanders and then spread like a straw fire over the Low Countries. Two years later the Dutch Revolt started that would further erode the basis of the power of the sincere Catholics.

They, however, managed to hold out for another decade. But when in 1576 Spanish power temporarily collapsed after Philip II had gone bankrupt once again, there was no central government anymore that could protect this faction. Two years later the sincere Catholics were finally forced from power in Amsterdam. They were banished and several of them decided to leave the Low Countries altogether.

In 1526 and 1566 it was not really witchcraft that was used as a political weapon, but the image of witchcraft. In 1526 this image had been used in Van Oostsanen's painting to attack the then ruling faction for its lax attitude towards the spread of heresy. But when it was again deployed forty years later it worked the other way around. The sincere Catholics now detected that witchcraft incriminations could be turned round and hit them as if with a boomerang.

References

Archival Sources

Amsterdam Municipal Archives, Archive 5014, inv.nr. 10 (Stadsrekening 1541).

Works Published before 1800

Alardus Aemstelredamus. 1539. *Haeretici descriptio*. Solingen: Johannes Soter.

Alardus Amstelredamus (ed.). 1523. *Passio Domini nostri Iesu Christi, sive Scopus meditationis Christianae, ex optimis quibusque poetis Christianis, iisque vetustissimis concinnatus*. Amsterdam: Doen Pietersz.

Alardus Amstelredamus. 1523. *Ritus edendi agni paschalis, Decem item plagae sive clades, quibus olim ob pharaonis impietatem, misere divexata est Aegyptus cum alijs non nullis eodem spectantibus, ex quibus haud obscure calamitosis huius saeculi faciem deprehendas*. Amsterdam: Doen Pietersz.

Dapper, O. 1663. *Historische Beschryving der Stadt Amsterdam*, Amsterdam: Jacob van Meurs.

Erasmus, Desiderius. 1703. *Opera omnia emendatiora et auctiora*. (Ed.) Jean le Clerc. 9 vols. Lugduni Batavorum: Petrus van der Aa.

Hier begint een scoone stome passye met storie wt den bybel en Evangelien tot LXXX *fighuren toe*. 1523. [Amsterdam]: Doen Pieterz.

Works Published after 1800

Allen, H. M. (ed.). 1918. *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*. 12 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1918.

Bietenholz, Peter Gerhard (ed.). 1985–1987. *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*. 3 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Carroll, Jane L. The Paintings of Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen (1472?–1533). PhD diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1987.

Dudok van Heel, Sebastiaan A. C. 2008. *Van Amsterdamse burgers tot Europese aristocraten. Hun geschiedenis en hun portretten. De Heijnen-maagschap 1400–1800*, 's-Gravenhage: Koninklijk Nederlandsch Genootschap voor Geslacht- en Wapenkunde.

Golden, Richard (ed.). *Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Traditon*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006.

Graaf Bierbrauwer, Bob de. 1958. *Alardus Amstelredamus (1491–1544): His Life and Works*. Amsterdam: Hertzberger.

Kölker, Albertus J. 1963. *Alardus Aemstelredamus en Cornelius Crocus, Twee Amsterdamse priester-humanisten. Hun leven, werken en theologische opvattingen: Bijdrage tot de kennis van het humanisme in Noord-Nederland in de eerste helft van de zestiende eeuw*. Nijmegen: Dekker & Van de Vegt.

Kirschbaum, Engelbert (ed.). 1968–76. *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*. 8 vols. Rome: Herder.

Meeuwissen, Daantje. 2006. A "Painter in Black and White": The Symbiotic Relationship Between the Paintings and Woodcuts of Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen. In *Making and Marketing: Studies of the Painting Process in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Workshops*, (ed.) Molly Ann Faries, 55–81. Turnhout: Brepols.

Mellink, Albert F. 1978. *Amsterdam en de wederdopers in de zestiende eeuw*. Nijmegen: SUN.

Möller, Christiane. 2005. *Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen und Doen Pietersz. Studien zur Zusammenarbeit zwischen Holzschneider und Drucker im Amsterdam des frühen 16. Jahrhunderts*. Münster: Waxmann.

Nierop, Henk van. 2007. A Tale of Two Brothers: Corporate Identity and the Revolt in the Towns of Holland. In *Between the Middle Ages and Modernity: Individual and Community in the Early Modern World*, (eds.) Charles H. Parker and Jerry H. Bentley, 53–70. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Nübel, Otto. 1972. *Pompejus Occo, 1483 bis 1537: Fuggerfaktor in Amsterdam*. Tübingen: Mohr.

Sullivan, Margaret A. 2000. The Witches of Dürer and Hans Baldung Grien. *Renaissance Quarterly* 53: 333–401.

Tracy, James D. 2005. *The Low Countries in the Sixteenth Century: Erasmus, Religion and Politics, Trade and Finance.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Waardt, Hans de. 2013. Witchcraft and Wealth: The Case of the Netherlands. In *Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*, (ed.) Brian Levack, 232–48. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 1991. *Toverij en samenleving: Holland 1500–1800*. Den Haag: Stichting Historische Reeks.

———. 2014. I Beg your Pardon: I am a Heretic! A Countryside Conventicle in Holland in the 1520s. In *Religious Minorities and Cultural Diversity in the Dutch Republic: Studies Presented to Piet Visser on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, (eds.) August den Hollander, Alex Noord, Mirjam van Veen and Anna Voolstra, 29–40. Leiden: Brill.

Wierus, Johannes. 1991. *Witches, Devils, and Doctors in the Renaissance: Johann Weyer, De praestigiis daemonum*, (eds.) George Mora and Benjamin Kohl; trans. John Shea; forew. by John Weber; with the collaboration of Erik Midelfort and Helen Bacon. Binghamton, N.Y.: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies.

Williams, George H. 2000. *The Radical Reformation*. Third edition. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press.

Wüstefeld, Wilhelmina C. M. 2011. "Clavicula Salomonis" or Occult Affairs in Amsterdam's Kalverstraat? Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostsanen and 'Saul and the Witch of Endor' Revisited. In *Living Memoria: Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Memorial Culture in Honour of Truus van Bueren*, (ed.) Rolf de Weijert, 347–364. Hilversum: Verloren.

Zijlstra, Samme. 2000. *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden. Geschiedenis van de dopersen in de Nederlanden, 1531–1675.* Hilversum: Verloren.

Zika, Charles. 2007. *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe*. London and New York: Routledge.

CHAPTER 7

Deep Down in Spirituality: Efforts of Seventeenth-Century New Netherlanders to Access God

Donna Merwick

On the last Friday in June, 1658, Governor Peter Stuyvesant was finishing off a report on his month-long visitation to Esopus (later Kingston, New York.) The settlement was home to sixty or seventy villagers who were farming and trading on land midway up the Hudson River between Manhattan Island and Beverwijck (later Albany, New York). Serious troubles had allegedly broken out with local natives, and the settlers were requesting military assistance from Stuyvesant, an officer who had served New Netherland as Director General for a decade and would continue to do so until 1664 when the province fell to the English and was renamed New York.

On May 28, he had accepted his councillors' advice to investigate the allegations and settle the matter amicably. On the same day, he assembled a bodyguard of sixty soldiers and left New Amsterdam (later New York City.) As was customary, he began a daily journal. The 4,500 words would constitute his report.

I have read the journal many times. Stuyvesant logged his actions meticulously day by day. So I was, as it were, with him "On Monday, the 3rd of June, in the morning," when he oversaw the digging of a moat where defensive palisades would be erected to enclose the village, "On the 13th, 14th and 15th" when he and his men commandeered the settlers to build a guardhouse, and "On the 25th, about noon" when he and his men embarked on a yacht and sailed for home (Fig. 7.1; map).

In my reading-journeys with him, I realized that I was catching descriptions of his performances as he sought to bring order to the settlement and to its relationships with the natives. I valued it as a revealing account of how one set of natives and Europeans could get themselves so dangerously entangled

* I wish to express my gratitude to The University of Pennsylvania Press for allowing me to call upon ideas and material from my 2013 publication with them for use in this essay. I shared early chapters of *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss Across Time* with Charles Zika. His inspiration carried me forward with the book, as it has in so many endeavours.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_009

FIGURE 7.1 *Map of New Netherland, circa 1660.*
EMILY BRISSENDEN DESIGN.

in one another's lives. I later came to be curious about other words that were clues—just traces—of how he was making sense of the days as they unrolled during the month of June. They were markers such as: "On the morning of the 30th [of May], Ascension Day, we marched to the bouwerie [farm] of Jacob Janse Stoll . . . where on Sundays and the other usual feasts the scriptures are read. After this had been done on that day in the forenoon, the inhabitants who had assembled there, were directed either to remain or to return in the afternoon." Another entry marked the brief time when he was farther up the Hudson River in Beverwijck: "On the 9th was Pentecost. On the afternoon of the 10th I left [for Esopus] after divine service [on Whitsuntide Day]." And another: "The 16th was Sunday, and after divine service, I inspected . . . the land on the Esopus . . . and found it suitable for about 50 bouweries."[1]

These were fleeting references to Stuyvesant as the religious man historians have rightly taken him to have been. The fragments are less than a hundred words out of the report's 4,500. We might say that they beg to be disregarded. They can, however, do more work for us than might initially seem possible. For they are like the sails in the statement, "Twelve sails appeared on the horizon." The sails clearly stand in for twelve ships. They are a metonymy, a figure of speech that gives us readers and writers literary depth, reach and beauty. In this case, the sails speak for themselves: the words signify their presence above the surface of the sea. The same words, however, also give presence to what is implied but absent. That is, they give presence to the reality of the twelve ships—their gun'wales, crews, quarterdecks and flags, anchors and ropes, their cargo holds.

In Stuyvesant's journal, the references to Ascension Day, Pentecost, and attendance at divine services are similarly parts to a whole: an absence and presence. The whole is an orientation to a world that is (like the ships) surely present but radically inconspicuous.[2] It is a worldview that the journal fragments allow us to understand—and in this way: belief in that worldview required continual effort.

The fragments record acts of volition. Up in Esopus, Stuyvesant *chose to celebrate* the meaning of Ascension Day and affirm it as a "feast" day. In Beverwijck on the second Sunday in June, he *made the effort* to celebrate Pentecost and delayed his return voyage back to Esopus until he had attended divine services.

---

1 Journal of Stuyvesant, May 28–June 30, 1658, in *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*: vol. 13: *Documents relating to the history and settlements of the towns along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers*, (eds.) Berthold Fernow and Edmund B. O'Callaghan (Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons, 1853–1887), 80–87. Hereafter *CHSNY*.

2 Eelco Runia, "Presence," *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 1–29.

On the following Sunday, he *took the opportunity* to participate in church services before making an inspection of the Esopus lands suitable for farming families. These were efforts to access God. They were efforts to confirm and continue to generate a relationship. They were public affirmations made to sustain a relationship that lay at the heart of a worldview that, more convincingly than any other, ordered knowledge and memory, explained change, the meaning of the transcendent and immanent, and the meaning of selfhood. They offered the "possibility of expectations."[3]

This providential orientation to the world—however *we* may look back on it—did not sustain itself automatically. It required effort. It asked for the binding of oneself to a literally endless commitment. It needed public performances that constituted belief, tales told and gestures made that were one's own to observe but were alongside those of others. The church-going New Netherlanders recognized that belief in God was always an immersion in an unstable process. It required re-enforcing performances. These were not unlike the small, routine and inconspicuous performances that Stuyvesant sought out and recorded in the journal he presented to his councillors.

On this point, it might be helpful to insert a personal note. Over the past forty years, I have struggled to discover ways of digging out and presenting some of the cultural features of Dutch New Netherland. To do this, I have found it valuable to explore domains of behaviour specific to one or another social and occupational group or individual within the colony's population. These were behaviours shaped by customary practices in Europe as well as those altered by or newly invented from experiencing North America. For example, I have asked: what did it mean to live one's lifetime as a farmer in Beverwijck [Albany, New York], or to have been a notary, or to have been Peter Stuyvesant? The chief advantages of this approach have turned out to be three. Putting bounds around centred cultural formations has made the expansive terrain of 'Dutch culture' more manageable, and it has turned me toward the greater use and value of existential evidence. Most important, it has drawn readers closely into the lives of some people of the past, in this case, Dutch migrants to the New World in the seventeenth century.[4]

---

3 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 198.

4 See Donna Merwick, *Death of a Notary: Conquest and Change in Colonial New York* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1999); *Possessing Albany, 1630–1710: The Dutch and English Experiences*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss Across Time*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

Let us return to religious performances. Like Stuyvesant, church-going New Netherlanders also point us to performances. They tell us of their desire for pious "edification." It was an emotion that Stuyvesant shared with them and bound him to them. For example, he knew something about the relationship between a number of the villagers on Long Island and Domine Johannes Polhemius, the preacher from whose ministry each one expected to derive edification for the sake of his or her own spirituality. Polhemius's ministry on Long Island was, like his life generally, of little significance. But for us it offers a beginning to studying spirituality in four ways. It directs our attention to the effort that membership in the Reformed Church required.[5]

It also points to the expectation that a magistrate would make edifying clerical behaviour one of the aims and outcomes of public policy-making. In the documents relating to Polhemius, Director General Stuyvesant emerges as an officer ready to play a central role in answering that demand as part of his official obligation to stabilize the ecclesiastical landscape of New Netherland. Again, Polhemius's story authenticates the evolving contexts for religious experiences noted in Herman Paul's identification of early modern Calvinist practice as "a marker of denominational identity" and *only later* identifiable as Calvin*ism*, that is, as a set of "elaborated ideas about God, human beings, and the natural world."[6] Finally, the Polhemius narative points to church-goers

5 New Netherland's population never exceeded 9,000 to 10,000 before 1664 and, before that time, numbers were considerably smaller. Church membership numbers are unsatisfactory, and only cautious estimates can be made. In *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), Jaap Jacobs estimated that in the 1650s and 1660s about 20% of the population were church members. (That would suggest about 2,000 men and women in 1664.) Jacobs notes that to that number, however, must be added those who were not members but attended religious services regularly and were present in considerable numbers. Membership in the New Amsterdam congregation in 1648 was 170 and between 300 and 400 in 1666. Upriver at Beverwijck (Albany), membership in 1652 was 130 and 200 in 1660. In Breuckelen, Long Island, in 1660, 24 of the 134 or 18.5% of residents were members; in 1664, the number was 96, see 291–95 and see Jaap Jacobs, *Migration, Population and Government in New Netherland* in *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609–2009*, (eds.) Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen, and Giles Scott-Smith (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009), 86, 87. Willem Frijhoff provides a careful breakdown of confessional adherents in 1650 in the Dutch Republic, concluding that Calvinism by no means exercised dominance across the Netherlands, *Was the Dutch Republic A Calvinist Community? The State, the Confessions, and Culture in the Early Modern Netherlands* in *The Republican Alternative: The Netherlands and Switzerland Compared*, (eds.) André Holenstein, Thomas Maissen and Maarten Prak (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 99–122.

6 Herman Paul, "Who Suffered from the Crisis of Historicism? A Dutch Example," *History and Theory* 49 (2010): 169–93, see 179.

constructing spaces of belief, the contents and patterning of which were, of their nature, independent of political and ecclesiastical authority. This is a matter of special significance when examining the New Netherland culture of which religion was a part.

The Desire for Edification

In 1654, Domine Johannes Theodorus Polhemius became one of Stuyvesant's responsibilities. The Director General had not written the governing body of the Reformed Church in Amsterdam requesting the minister's services. Rather, Polhemius was aboard a ship that had encountered difficulties making its way from Brazil to Holland and landed him at New Amsterdam. The village of Flatbush and other communities on Long Island quickly sought Stuyvesant's approval to call him as their minister. He lived among them until his death in 1676.

Polhemius was, as I've suggested, an insignificant man. His affairs are, for example, lodged colourlessly in the minutes kept by Stuyvesant and his council between 1654 and 1658. They are also referred to in several letters written by Stuyvesant, and two or three brief notations in the records of the Reformed Church's Classis in Amsterdam.[7]

Polhemius was a disappointment to the churches he served. He did have moments of eccentricity that lifted his actions above the level of the everyday. Reportedly, at one point he wanted to "preach in the public street in the open air." This would have been particularly fascinating were it a deliberate reintroduction of the early Reformation hedge preaching or the disruptive anti-Catholic psalm-singing then carried on by Protestants through European town and city streets. The threat, however, appears to have been meant to offend the Breuckelen (Brooklyn) villagers who were denying him a proper salary and a house for services.[8] In general, then, he was simply ordinary. But it is the

7 *CHSNY*, 14 holds a number of letters (mostly from 1656 to 1658) pertinent to Polhemius and authored by Stuyvesant, magistrates of Long Island villages, directors of the WIC, and the Classis in Amsterdam, 367–414. See also Power of Attorney on October 15, 1654 before Provincial Secretary, *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch. Translated and Annotated by Arnold J. F. Van Laer, Volume III: Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1648–1660*, (eds.) Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda, (Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1974), 376, 377. For a short biography of Polhemius, see Willem Frederik (Eric) Nooter, "Between Heaven and Earth: Church and Society in Pre-Revolutionary Flatbush, Long Island" (PhD diss., Vrije Universitiet Amsterdam, 1994), 22 and following.

8 *CHSNY*, 14: Magistrates' Petition to Stuyvesant, January [?], 1657, 381.

ordinary that his life valuably illuminates. For down there in the everyday, as it were, spirituality takes place. And, within that mode of living, we discover the New Netherlanders' need for edification.

It came about this way. In January of 1657, the magistrates of Breuckelen complained to Stuyvesant about Polhemius, who was then serving three small Long Island villages: Flatbush, Amersfoort and Breuckelen. They put a convincing case for avoiding their village's share of paying his salary. Theirs was, they began, a landscape of poverty. They were, they continued, representatives of a community impoverished by Indian attacks and other disasters. Everywhere abandoned farms marked the land. Most farmers were "very simple and poor." Contributing the required 300 guilders toward the minister's annual salary was therefore an "impossibility."

The landscape of belief was equally bleak. Polhemius, they wrote, had given them "meagre and unsatisfactory" service. He comes here from Flatbush only for two weeks, they said, and choses to be with us for only a quarter of an hour on Sunday afternoons. Instead of a sermon, he gives us only a prayer "from which we learn and understand little." In all "he gives small edification to the congregation." On the Sunday before this past Christmas, they continued, we expected to be offered a sermon. Instead, "we had to listen to a prayer so short that it was over before we had collected our thoughts." The preacher had then hastily returned home to Flatbush. "And this was all the edification—little enough—which we have had during the Christmas holidays."[9]

By this account, the Reformed believers were not looking to Polhemius for theological instruction. They were not asking for tuition in Calvinist dogmatics. Nor were they concerned for apologetics. They were simply asking him to be with them longer. They wanted him to play out the usual rituals more abundantly and more often, and to reinforce their belief by all the actions that made up his presence among them. Similar to the work done by "twelve sails," an edifying minister was meant to be an embodiment of the Spirit's wider presence. They were seeking behaviours that would authorize their own acts of belief.

9 *CHSNY*, 14: Magistrates' Petition to Stuyvesant, January [?], 1657, 381. It is difficult to know exactly when Polhemius's ministerial credentials arrived on Long Island. His earlier career was as a teacher but as early as 1655 he was recognized as a minister and therefore credentialed to administer the sacraments, *Council Minutes, 1655–1656*, (ed.) and trans. Charles T. Gehring, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 70. For a minister expected to give "an edifying . . . example," see, *inter alia*, Attestation Regarding Domine Henricus Selijns, July 23, 1664, *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch. Old First Dutch Reformed Church of Brooklyn, New York. First Book of Records, 1660–1752*, (ed.) and trans. A. P. G. Jos van der Linde (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1983), 95.

They expected of Polhemius what individual belief acts require: not incidental but continuous evidence that alongside their own assertions of belief were those of others.

Nothing required more effort on the part of Christian New Netherlanders than retention of religious belief. I think there are two reasons for this. First, the act of belief required a continuous struggle involving the intellect and will. Second, seventeenth-century New Netherland was a mission landscape. It was an unstable religious terrain. One of its major features was *kinesis*—preachers and meetinghouses, deacons and schoolteachers, churchgoing members, all in motion. For Christian believers, the New Testament had its way of redeeming such a landscape. The Acts of the Apostles, for example, furnished New Netherlanders with an imagination that gave its blessing to preachers moving over great distances, local churches as improvisations, crude mealtime tables turned into places for the celebration of the Eucharist—to the makeshift, the making-do, the moving on—to uprooting oneself for a cause, pushing farther for a harvest of souls.

The struggle of New Netherland churchgoers to believe was no less fraught than the comparable effort made by medieval Christians in the so-called Age of Faith. Both took upon themselves the discipline of maintaining a commitment to a series of true propositions. But, by that, they found themselves continually needing to accommodate truths often unsettling to their personal dispositions. The Christians of Breuckelen longed for edification not because they were at rest with the certainty of their belief but because, on the contrary, they lived with "imperfect certitude," the tug-of-war between doubt and certainty.[10] Edification answered belief's need to be affirmed again and again. Each individual needed to reach for props to avoid her or his own disbelief or

10 Steven Justice, "Did the Middle Ages Believe in Their Miracles?" *Representations* 103 (2008): 1–29, see 12, 13, and also Galina Lindquist and Simon Coleman, "Introduction: Against Belief?" *Social Analysis* 52 (2008): 1–18. For spirituality maintained through the edifying and embodied practices of others, see Stephen D. Glasier, "Demanding Deities and Reluctant Devotees: Belief and Unbelief in the Trinidadian Orisa Movement," *Social Analysis* 52 (2008): 19–28, see 24 and, in agreement, Galina Lindquist, "Loyalty and Command: Shamans, Lamas, and Spirits in a Siberian Ritual," *Social Analysis* 52 (2008), 111–26, see 118 and Jon P. Mitchell and Hildi J. Mitchell, "For Belief: Embodiment and Immanence in Catholicism and Mormonism," *Social Analysis* 52 (2008), 79–94. Phyllis Mack Crew, in *Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands, 1544–1569* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978) quotes the Genevan Confession of Faith, 1561: those who are of the true Church, "battle against it [loss of faith] . . . all the days of their lives," 51.

indifference. It requires prodigality, not a fifteen minute prayer and an otherwise absent minister.

Breuckelen's magistrates were correct in sensing a corporate longing for edification among the village's Reformed congregation. Stuyvesant was also aware of this corporate need and strove to meet it in public legislation. But the struggle was set in the individualized experience of faith. In that light, a decently long sermon, an offering of something to "learn and understand," a preacher's demonstration that Christmas services were special—that he needed them too—these were not too much to ask.

Polhemius's appearances in the provincial records are those of a poor man desperate to have his salary settled and his church built. Across Stuyvesant's table came papers about sums of money denied him, the theft of planks that Stuyvesant expressly provided for his church-house, and back pay still owed him by the West India Company, the trading corporation entrusted to govern New Netherland by the States-General of the United Provinces.[11] If, however, we turn our attention away from Polhemius and toward the environment with which he was struggling, we are led not away from the seemingly petty world of unpaid contributions and purloined wooden planks but deeper into the unsettled mission landscape of which those realities were a part and a spirituality which he, and Stuyvesant in a much more entangled way, had to manage.

11 For data on *kerk-huizen* (domestic church-houses), see *inter alia* CHSNY, 14: Appointment of Commissioners for Church at Midwout, December 17, 1654, 310, and for accommodation for "a house of worship and in the same lodgings for the preacher," see Council Minute, February 9, 1655, in *Council Minutes, 1655–1656*, 20. Also consult David William Voorhees, "Flatbush in the Time of the Van Varicks" in *Dutch New York Between East and West: The World of Margrieta Van Varick*, (eds.) Deborah Krohn and Peter N. Miller, with Marybeth De Filippis (Bard Graduate Center: Decorative Arts, Design History, Material Culture, New Haven and London, The New-York Historical Society and Yale University Press, 2009). For theft of planks, CHSNY, 14: December 14, 1656, 370, 371 and see 376; for denied salary, and petitions, October 13, 1654, 294, February 25, 1656, 338, March 28, 1656, December 21, 1656, 377–80 and Petition of Polhemius to Stuyvesant, January 29, 1658, 411, 412 and see 414. These pleadings also appear in official church records, see Nooter, "Between Heaven and Earth," 17. Back pay arises as an issue in CHSNY, 14: Appointment of Commissioners, December 17, 1654, 310, and 14: Polhemius to Stuyvesant, December 14, 1656, 371.

Administering an Early Spiritual Landscape

Wherever he went in New Netherland in the 1640s and 1650s, a preacher carried the sign of impermanence. Polhemius's biography tells us this, and so do brief accounts of ministers on the Delaware River, in Esopus and Beverwijck, and even those more settled ministers of New Amsterdam after the mid-1650s. In considering aspects of this mobility, we find spirituality and its public management coming together.

The preacher was, in the first place, a mobile figure on the land. He could present a dangerous challenge to a provincial administrator such as Stuyvesant who could be blamed for allowing religious "innovation and turbulence." By his calling and need to serve a widely dispersed set of local church communities, a preacher could make close surveillance of his orthodoxy—and his honesty or morality—difficult. A man claiming to be a preacher might, for example, suddenly intrude himself into a village's religious community. Or, as happened in 1661, he might be a man dishonourably dismissed as a minister in a place such as the Dutch-held Caribbean island of Curaçao and who then appeared in New Netherland where he might be employed by Stuyvesant and local church elders unaware of his dismissal and long history as a petty thief. Or he might be a rogue similar to Michiel Zyperus who was reported to have been preaching on Manhattan Island while drinking, cheating and forging the papers of others. Having finally been exposed as a criminal, he took off for Virginia.[12]

From at least 1555–1556 forward, Holland's Reformed Church officials were aware of the dangers of unsupervised itinerancy. They moved strenuously to confront its consequences whenever they could. Again and again, they reminded would-be itinerant preachers that they were not "apostles." They were men settled in specific local church congregations. With good reason, Stuyvesant too distrusted those he called "scatteringe preachers."[13]

---

12 For "innovation and turbulence," see *CHSNY*, 14: Stuyvesant to Dirs. April 21, 1660, 472. For examples, see Case of Willem Grasmeer: Classis of Amsterdam to Grasmeer in Rensselaerswijck, February 20, 1651 in E. Tanjore Corwin and [later] Hugh Hastings, eds, *Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York*, vol. I (Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon, 1901–1916) 289, and also 286–97, 301; *CHSNY*, 14: Magistrates of Breuckelen to Stuyvesant, January [16?], 1657, 381; Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: Acts of the Classis of Amsterdam, August 7 1651, Classis to Drisius, December 5, 1661, and Drisius to Classis, August 5/14, 1664, 296, 514, 555.

13 Crew, *Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm*, 71; *CHSNY*, 14: Stuyvesant to Officer in Rustdorp [Long Island], January 24, 1661, 493 [ed's translation]. Correspondence of the directors in Amsterdam suggests that on at least one occasion they had kept "an eye on" one suspicious preacher, Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: Dirs. to Stuyvesant, April 4, 1652, 307.

Second, the preacher generally held services in a domestic church (*huis-kerk*.) These were not unlike the early Christians' church-houses of the post-Resurrection and Pauline period. In cities such as Amsterdam, Reformed churches were becoming readily distinguishable architecturally from the private houses or *schuilkerken* (hidden churches) where conventiclers such as Lutherans, Catholics or other unorthodox sectarians were meeting. But in New Netherland, the home country's protocol of allowing private meetings for non-Calvinist worshipers ran against a landscape of small villages (even New Amsterdam was comparatively sparsely populated) where privacy was not a possibility. In villages of twenty to thirty houses, dissenting 'heretics' could not (even if they wished to, and often they did not) avoid their gatherings being public. As we shall see, these were the dissenters who Stuyvesant—not unlike magistrates across Western Europe—was responsible for identifying, searching out and, if necessary, disbanding by banishment.

De zending is the Dutch word for mission. The sending-out was a perfect word for the spatial and temporal imagination at work in the establishment and operation of the Reformed mission in New Netherland. In a powerful way, it situated the North American landscape in the early apostolic world of post-Resurrection figures. These were men and women whose pious practices, visions and restless carrying forth of the Gospel dominated an age that—in the eyes of the Reformers—preceded the superstitions and worldliness of the medieval Church. Its selfless and edifying figures were meant to be replicated in the preachers who would stand in not as medieval Catholic saints but as embodiments of the true Christian—and now reformed—religion.

In this respect, Stuyvesant's customary call for the Reformed churches in New Netherland to be "pure"[14] churches was the invocation of a word purposefully lifted out of a specific and specifically historical Protestant imagination. The historical element in this imagination explains why Stuyvesant never referred to himself or fellow-believers as Calvinists but as "Christians" or members of the *reformed* church.

The letters of the Reformed church's governing body in Amsterdam to the churches in New Amsterdam give us some insight into how the Christian

14 For "pure," Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: Proclamation of a Day of Prayer Set for March 13 [Issued January 21], 1658, 414. For the teachings of heretics and the Church of Rome as opposed to "the pure truth." Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: Classis to Consistory of New Amsterdam, May 25, 1657, 379. Crew, in *Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm*, encounters this emphasis on purity when researching the iconoclastic happenings of 1555–1557, 58. For preachers as "living sequels to the Bible," see Simon Coleman, "Transgressing the Self: Making Charismatic Saints," *Critical Inquiry* 35 (2009): 417–39, see 420.

church's distant past was being transmitted into their shared present. The words of the Classis (synod) frequently strive for the style of the apostle Paul. They fill out the Classis's understanding of early church structure. In a letter of 1642, the Classis adopted the exhortatory style of Paul and his mode of individualizing letters to the emerging Christian communities—now to the Romans, later to the Corinthians, then solely to the church gathered at Thessalonica. So the ministers addressed themselves as writing to "The Church of Christ at Manhattan." As Paul would, they continued by establishing a familiarity with some of the conditions that were either a source of suffering for the fledgling Christians or cause for rejoicing. So they write: we know of your circumstances there in New Netherland and rejoice that God has given you a reasonable degree of prosperity. We are sending you Johannes Megapolensis. "You are . . . exhorted" to receive him with kindness so that Christ's kingdom may be "more widely extended there."[15]

The transmission of the church's distant past into New Netherland's present was in evidence in the Director General's continual efforts to see that preachers were adequately supported financially. Such efforts were his responsibility as chief magistrate. In 1654, he made clear his reason for carrying out those duties. He drew upon the days of the apostolic church. It was the teaching of "the Apostle Paulus," he argued, "that he, who serves at the altar, shall live by it."[16]

The New Netherland records are testimony to Stuyvesant's efforts to supply (as he put it) "able and orthodox Ministers to the Edification of Gods [sic] glorie" and the townspeople's spiritual wellbeing.[17] The same records, however,

---

15 Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: Classis to Consistory of New Amsterdam, April 22, 1642, 150, 151. For references to St. Paul dominating in the writings of the reformers, see Willem Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz.: Een Hollands Weeskind op Zoek naar Zichzelf, 1607–1647* (Nijmegen: SUN Memoria, 1995), 423. He makes the point that, contrary to some interpretations, images from the New Testament were as plentiful in sermons as those of the Old Testament, 319.

16 *CHSNY*, 14: Petition Copied into the Book of Petitions from Magistrates of Midwout and Amesfoort, Done in New Amsterdam by the Director-General and High Council, October 13, 1654, 294. For Stuyvesant's home province of Friesland as a place where, more than in Holland, Calvinist leaders demanded that secular authorities had the right to appoint and maintain ministers, see Jaap Jacobs, "Like Father, Like Son? The Early Years of Petrus Stuyvesant" in *Revisiting New Netherland: Perspectives on Early Dutch America*, (ed.) Joyce D. Goodfriend (Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2005), 217.

17 *CHSNY*, 14: Council Minutes, March 26 and April 2, 1658, 413, 414. For Stuyvesant's insistence that a minister's salary payment be made before harvesting, see Howard G. Hageman, introduction, in *Old First Dutch Reformed Church: First book of records,*

are a melancholy report on the desperate efforts of believing communities to have a minister among them who would administer the sacraments and regularise religious services. Grounds for ambiguities and irregularities were everywhere. *Ziekentroosters* were men appointed to bring consolation to the sick by reading the Scriptures. Frequently, however, they acted as self-appointed ministers, some claiming prophetic gifts. They may well have known some Latin and, if they had been theological students, were probably ranked among the least accomplished.[18] They were meant to be passive before the Word, reading from a prescribed sermon book but not presuming to interpret it. Yet the absence of a minister made even easier their drift into assuming the role of surrogate for a licensed preacher. In New Netherland, as another example, some colonists were descendants of the first settlers of the late 1620s. A number of these early colonists had failed to bring certificates that proved that they belonged to a church congregation at home because they came "not thinking that a church would be formed or established here." So the appearance of a preacher, any apparently qualified preacher, was a boon. In 1666, Stuyvesant received news about an elderly minister's efforts to serve some of the dispersed Reformed congregations. His case is not unusual. "Father is old and weak," a friend wrote. "[P]reaching by turns in the outside villages does not help him much."[19]

1660–1752, (ed.) A. P. G. Jos van der Linde (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1983), xi–xxix, see xii; for Stuyvesant's gift of a piece of land to the Board of Overseers of the Poor, *CHSNY*, 14: Council Minute, June 3, 1655, 326. Fines for non-payment of contributions to ministers' salaries are in *CHSNY*, 14: Council Minutes, March 26 and April 2, 1658, 413, 414. One man, a Catholic, was fined twelve guilders for non-payment of Polhemius's salary, 414. For personal intervention in the case of Polhemius, *CHSNY*, 14: Petition of Magistrates of Midwout and Amesfoort to Council, February 15, 1656, 337; Petition Read in Council, February 25, 1656, 338; Council Minutes, March 28, 1656, 345; Appointment of Commissioners, December 17, 1654, 310; Council Minutes, February 9, 1655, 312; Petition of Magistrates of Midwout and Amesfoort to Council, January 15, 1655, 327; Pohemius to Stuyvesant, December 14, 1656, 371; Stuyvesant to Magistrates of Midwout, December 21, 1656, 376, 378–80; Petition of Polhemius to Stuyvesant, January 29, 1658, 411, 412; Polhemius to Stuyvesant, December 14, 1656, 371. For Rustdorp's (Jamaica, Long Island's) villagers "urgently" desiring that Stuyvesant appoint a clergyman, *CHSNY*, 14: Council Minutes, [?], 1661, 489.

18 Frijhoff, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz*, 518–20, 623–26, 402. For *voorlezers* as "zealous instigators" of trouble for established ministers in the 1680s, see Voorhees, "Flatbush in the Time of the Van Varicks", 87.

19 Jonas Michaëlius to Adrianus Smoutius, August 11, 1628, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909*, vol. 4, (ed.) I[saac] N[ewton] Phelps Stokes (New York: Robert H. Dodd, 1915–1928), 73; *CHSNY*, 2: Cornelis van Ruyven to Stuyvesant, August 7/17, 1666, 473. For the low number of ministers as a serious problem in post-Reformation Friesland, see Jacobs,

Lacking adequate services, improvisations evolved. Some were legal. Others skirted the margins of legality. The records speak of villagers being disturbed by these developments. The biography of Polhemius is again valuable. In the same letter to Stuyvesant in which the magistrates complained about him, they concluded that with his dismissal they now intended to secure "more edification" by taking an option that others, facing the dearth of preachers or dissatisfaction with them, were taking as well. They would appoint "someone of our own midst to read a sermon from a book of homilies (*huis postille*) every Sunday." In that way, they would receive "more edification" than "hitherto received by the person or prayer of Do. Polhemius."[20]

Managing Disputes and Ambiguities

The bleakness of the spiritual landscape of New Netherland certainly arose from the primitive conditions bound to accompany any early modern overseas enterprise. But the first half of the seventeenth century was a uniquely turbulent time. These were decades immediately following the upheaval of the Protestant Reformation—or, in the minds of many historians, they were themselves decades within "the long Reformation."[21] The *Alteratie* that changed Amsterdam's municipal government from Catholic to Calvinist, for example, predated Peter Stuyvesant's birth in 1610 by only nine years. His generation were young in 1619 when the Synod of Dort (Dordrecht) was still seeking to stabilise the doctrinal foundations of the Dutch Reformed Church. The 'old church' of the emperor and the papacy had split apart. In countless places, its administrative apparatus—seated in the sees of bishops, the lands of prince-bishops and abbots, and the rooms of city councils—had either disappeared or fallen into tatters. For the first time, Protestant magistrates were thrust into positions of power that called for interpreting the nature of and relationships between church and state, the secular and the ecclesiastical, the legitimate place of one denomination or another within their jurisdictions. We are not

"Like Father, Like Son?", 217, and for the difficulty of staffing pulpits in the English North American settlements, Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), 55 and 139–42.

20 *CHSNY*, 14: Magistrates of Breuckelen to Stuyvesant, January [?], 1657, 381. In "Flatbush in the Time of the Van Varicks", Voorhees cites Domine Roelof (Rudolphus) van Varick being praised first of all for his "edifying . . . way of life," 49.

21 See Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 10 and see 80, 102.

looking at Calvinism as imagined today. Rather, it was trying to find a place for itself in a very old Catholic world. In New Netherland, a governor such as Peter Stuyvesant was required to find his way toward installing a Calvinist dispensation in the same way as he was required to install customs regulations. And Calvinist believers needed to find their way toward new forms of spirituality. One example illuminates this with particular clarity. In 1658, Stuyvesant was entangled in a dispute over two words, "here" and "church." New Amsterdam's Lutherans had informed fellow-religionists in Holland of their displeasure with the prevailing use of both words. Some of them had been attending Reformed services on Manhattan Island but were now "separating" from the congregation. The words being used in the baptismal formulary were those set out by the Synod of Dort and were "offensive." They required a child's parents and witnesses to be "here" in the "church" for the administration of the sacrament.

The directors advised Stuyvesant to consider the issue this way. "Here . . . [in Holland] the church does not lay such great stress on the presence of the parents and witnesses." The "old formulary of baptism is still used in many churches." It is "less offensive and more moderate than the new . . . [formula of Dort.]" Recall, they continued, the initial years of the Reformation. The formulary was then deliberately used "to attract people of different beliefs" and to continue to use the most tolerant means to draw "people of other persuasions" to the public Reformed Church.[22]

Stuyvesant referred the matter to two trusted ministers in New Amsterdam. They quickly shared their findings with him and his council. The Lutherans' charges, they wrote, were the false accusations of ignorant men and women. None of them has a "proper acquaintance with the teaching of Dr. Luther. They only remain his followers because their parents and ancestors were." Let it be clear. They object to the fundamental meaning of "church" as much as "present here." Our baptismal formula uses the word "church" in its singular form. They want it pluralized, that is, altered to "Protestant and Reformed churches." Failing this, they charge, our liturgy is invoking "the Papal church."[23]

---

22 CHSNY, 14: Dirs. to Stuyvesant, June 7, 1658, 421. For two Amsterdam preachers' belief that Lutherans could find "abundant edification and comfort of soul" in the Reformed Church, see Preachers in Amsterdam to Domine Schaats, December 15, 1661, Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, 1, 515.

23 The ministers' advice to Stuyvesant is Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, 1: Johannes Megapolensis to Stuyvesant and Council, August 23, 1658, 428, 429. For each individual post-Resurrection congregation called a "church" (as the Lutherans were demanding), see John Norman Davidson Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th rev. ed. (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1977), 189. The charge that in the church services of one of the two ministers in New Amsterdam, Johannes Megapolensis, was leaning toward the Church

The disagreement over words and rubrics suggests the ambiguities still in need of ironing out in the 1650s. The same disagreement also brought to the fore a more fundamental distinction between the newly emerging Reformed churches in New Netherland and those in the Fatherland. As the two ministers put it, the practices of "the church of Christ here" might well be different from those of the churches at home. To validate this contention, they called upon the ministry of Paul to the gentiles. The "apostolic churches" established by Paul, they insisted, customarily accommodated to local circumstances. (This tactic the ministers supported.) But the early churches were not yield "one iota" in the face of those locals "who came to spy out the liberty of believers." Spying, they pointed out, had arisen in the case of Paul accepting Titus as a Christian even though he was uncircumcised. In countering it, Paul contended face-to-face with the church of Jerusalem. With the Lutherans clearly in mind, the ministers quoted Paul's letter to the Galacians: the matter would never have arisen "but for the presence of some pseudo-Christians, who wormed their way into our meeting to spy on the liberty we enjoy . . . [But] we did not give those men an inch, for the truth of the gospel for you and all the gentiles was at stake." Our mission is "to the gentiles, and theirs . . . [in Jerusalem] to the Jews."[24]

In this episode, the divisions within the Protestant cause—even within the Reformed churches—are shown to constitute a spectre not yet put to rest. Similarly, the Papal Church of the medieval past emerges as a reality whose survival and possible resurgence still had the power to haunt church reformers and magistrates. But from the same medieval period there also came forward

---

of Rome would have hit a raw nerve. It drew attention to the fact that he had once been a Roman Catholic and had only recently shown open sympathy for several Jesuit priests' brutal treatment at the hands of the Iroquois in Canada. For their lengthy explanation and defence of this relationship, see Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: Megapolensis and Samuel Drisius to Classis, September 28, 1658, 436–39.

24 Answers to the Objections of the West India Company Concerning the Form of Baptism, August 23, 1658, Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: 431. One needs to be cautious in presenting the Reformed Church in the Netherlands as one of doctrinal unanimity. In their "Answer," Megapolensis and Drisius carefully point for support to biblical references as well as the outcomes of two synods in the Netherlands Provinces, both of which demonstrated differing interpretations of "apostolic churches" held in "good conscience," see 431. See also Jacobs, "Like Father, Like Son?": after the Reformation, in Friesland (Stuyvesant's home province) there were "many disconcerting diversions from orthodoxy" among the Calvinist ministry, 207. For the satisfactory settlement of this dispute, see Corwin, *Ecclesiastical Records*, I: Megapolensis and Drisius to Classis, September 10, 1659, 449, Acts of the Classis of Amsterdam, July 6, 1660, 477, and Stuyvesant to Dirs., April 21, 1660, 475.

elements of a residual Catholic spirituality that—unrecognized or otherwise—continued to enrich individual New Netherlander's belief practices.

A close investigation of the porousness between the popular beliefs (and quasi-superstitions) of the 'old church' and those of the Reformed in New Netherland is yet to be undertaken. But the evidence is more than inconsequential: the acceptance of death might still derive from the image of the communion of saints, that is, "departure . . . from the Church Militant here, to the Church Triumphant above";[25] a provincial ordinance of 1663 proclaiming a Day of Thanksgiving and prayer might put before believers a warning about "the needle of sin," a metaphor taken from the sermons of St. Bernard of Clairvaux; New Netherlanders (Catholics and Protestants alike) still read the heavens—especially comets—as signs of Christ's anger.[26] In 1638, a wealthy and tough-minded Amsterdam merchant who established a patroonship (i.e., colony under the sponsorship of a wealthy investor) in New Netherland took up a sheet of paper and wrote at the top of it, "In the name of the Lord . . . in Amsterdam."[27]

These performances return us to those of Stuyvesant in his month-long expedition of 1658. That is, like him, the merchant was (in this case, momentarily) making God present to himself. He was re-confirming a relationship, using inscription to arouse presence. He performance illustrates something he took for granted. It is something about life lived in plural temporalities. From a later viewpoint of scientific history, such a performance may seem mystifying. But this is only so if some modern logic has been allowed to override the evidence, translating it as somehow incidental or dismissing it as just formulaic. Or the performance is dismissed when everyday secular practices and religious belief are taken to be fixed opposites rather than interpenetrating. The unexpected

25 Jan Baptist van Rensselaer to Jeremias and Richard van Rensselaer, June 12, 1670, *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer, 1651–1674*, (ed.) and trans. Arnold J. F. van Laer, (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1932), 422.

26 Ordinance Proclaiming a Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer, March 1, 1663, *Old First Dutch Reformed Church, Records*, (ed.) and trans. van der Linde, 65. The "needle of sin" is a metaphor taken from Bernard's sermon on the *Song of Songs*, no. 82; Jeremias van Rensselaer to Jan Baptist van Rensselaer, April 5/15, 1665, Van Laer, *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer*, 375, 376.

27 Kiliaen van Rensselaer to Wouter van Twiler, September 25, 1636, *Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts, Being the Letters of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, 1630–1643, and other Documents Relating to the Colony of Rensselaerswyck*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 2008), (ed.) and trans. Arnold J.F. van Laer, 319, and see Donna Merwick, "A Genre of Their Own: Kiliaen van Rensselaer as Guide to the Reading and Writing Practices of Early Modern Businessmen," *William & Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, LXV (October 2008): 669–712.

presence of the fragment of spirituality is, in other words, allegedly an inconsistency. It either needs to be explained away as a cultural oddity or as, in any case, exceeding the generally accepted secular categories of the social sciences. But the fragment opens the possibility that the merchant was neither hopelessly tethered by the obligations of belief nor *burdened* by religious practices. Instead, he was empowered to consider himself made whole.

Identifying these personal corners of spirituality should not be cause for surprise. Many of the Reformation's best scholars have already discovered that, alongside new emphases on absorbing the Word by dedicated listening and reading, the Protestant upheaval did not result in an obliteration of popular Catholic practices.[28] Rather—and however fleetingly—their retention on the level of popular piety reinforces the point made by Herman Paul and already referred to, that is, the distinction between early Calvinist practice as marking a still-unstable denominational identity, and the highly elaborated and powerful religious institution that Calvin*ism* came to be in a place such as nineteenth-century Germany.[29]

It was within this landscape of instability that New Netherland's seventeenth-century Calvinists sought to access God. In engaging with New Netherland studies, there is a special value in getting "deep down in spirituality." An example such as this demonstrates its importance. In 2004 and in a highly popular book, Russell Shorto described Stuyvesant as arriving as

28 Frijhoff reminds readers of a continuing mystical tradition in Dutch pietism, including visions and, in one instance, a rapturous experience lasting nine days, that is, suggestive of the length of a Catholic novena, *Wegen van Evert Willemsz*, 21. Dennis E. Tamburello puts the same argument in *Union with Christ: John Calvin and the Mysticism of St. Bernard* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994): "The Reformers drew from the well of medieval spirituality in numerous ways," and these continued to surface well after the sixteenth century, 108. In 2011, Barbara Fuchs dealt directly with sameness and difference in religious discourse and practice. She discovered the uncertainty and contradictory nature of religious ideologies as they appear in the moment of their emergence, suggesting that recent Reformation and religious studies have widened the spectrum of pertinent texts and issued in a new awareness of "more sameness." See Barbara Fuchs, "Religion and National Distinction in the Early Modern Atlantic," in *Empires of God: Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Atlantic*, (eds.) Linda Gregerson and Susan Juster (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 58–86, 59. Walsham's *Reformation of the Landscape* remains the outstanding work on Reformation transformations as registering change but also continuity. She notes, for example, transmutations such as medieval Catholic Rogation Days surviving in England as "perambulating the boundaries" 252, Protestant adaptations of pilgrimage journeys, 239, and Protestants' genuine fear of a range of Catholic survivalisms, 153.

29 Paul, "Who Suffered from the Crisis of Historicism?"

governor on Manhattan Island in 1647. He had, as Shorto writes, this expectation: that he would be dominating sinners already accustomed to "groveling before a stern God."[30]

This is current popular mythology. I think we can begin to contest it by considering spirituality. For such an engagement uncovers an area where belief is (consciously and unconsciously) personally constructed. This activity is neither grovelling nor anti-institutional. Rather, it is an exercise of independence where individuals make sense of their lives by making personal choices among the elements of a living faith.

References

Works Published after 1800

Certeau, Michel de. 1988. *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (trans.) Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Coleman, Simon. 2009. Transgressing the Self: Making Charismatic Saints. *Critical Inquiry* 35: 417–39.

Corwin, Tanjore E. and [later] Hugh Hastings (eds.). 1901–1916. *Ecclesiastical Records, State of New York*, vol. I. Albany, NY: J. B. Lyon.

Crew, Phyllis Mack. 1978. *Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands, 1544–1569*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fernow, Berthold and Edmund B. O'Callaghan (ed.) and trans. 1881. *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, vol. 13: *Documents Relating to the History and Settlements of the Towns Along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers*. Albany, NY: Weed, Parsons.

Frijhoff, Willem. 2008. Was the Dutch Republic A Calvinist Community? The State, the Confessions, and Culture in the Early Modern Netherlands. In *The Republican Alternative: The Netherlands and Switzerland Compared*, (eds.) André Holenstein, Thomas Maissen and Maarten Prak, 99–122. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

———. 1995. *Wegen van Evert Willemsz.: Een Hollands Weeskind op Zoek naar Zichzelf, 1607–1647*. Nijmegen: SUN Memoria.

Fuchs, Barbara. 2011. Religion and National Distinction in the Early Modern Atlantic. In *Empires of God: Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Atlantic*, (eds.) Linda Gregerson and Susan Juster, 58–86. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

30 For "Groveling" Calvinists see Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America* (New York, Doubleday, 2004), 169.

Gehring, Charles T. (ed.) and trans. 2000. *Council Minutes, 1647–1653*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

———. 1995. *Council Minutes, 1655–1656*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Glasier, Stephen D. 2008. Demanding Deities and Reluctant Devotees: Belief and Unbelief in the Trinidadian Orisa Movement. *Social Analysis* 52: 19–28.

Jacobs, Jaap. 2005. Like Father, Like Son? The Early Years of Petrus Stuyvesant. In *Revisiting New Netherland: Perspectives on Early Dutch America*, (ed.) Joyce D. Goodfriend, 205–42. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

———. 2009. Migration, Population and Government in New Netherland. In *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609–2009*, (eds.) Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen and Giles Scott-Smith, 85–96. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

———. 2005. *New Netherland: A Dutch Colony in Seventeenth-Century America*. Leiden and Boston: Brill.

Justice, Steven. 2008. Did the Middle Ages Believe in Their Miracles? *Representations* 103: 1–29.

Kelly, John Norman Davidson. 1977. *Early Christian Doctrines*. Fifth revised edition. London: Adam and Charles Black.

Lindquist, Galina and Simon Coleman. 2008. Introduction: Against Belief? *Social Analysis* 52: 1–18.

———. 2008. Loyalty and Command: Shamans, Lamas, and Spirits in a Siberian Ritual. *Social Analysis* 52: 111–26.

Merwick, Donna. 1990. *Possessing Albany, 1630–1710: The Dutch and English Experiences*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1999. *Death of a Notary: Conquest and Change in Colonial New York.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

———. 2008. A Genre of Their Own: Kiliaen van Rensselaer as Guide to the Reading and Writing Practices of Early Modern Businessmen. *William & Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, LXV (October): 669–712.

———. 2013. *Stuyvesant Bound: An Essay on Loss Across Time*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Mitchell, Jon P. and Hildi J. Mitchell. 2008. For Belief: Embodiment and Immanence in Catholicism and Mormonism, *Social Analysis* 52: 79–94.

New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch. Old First Dutch Reformed Church of Brooklyn, New York. First Book of Records, 1660–1752. 1983. Baltimore, MA: Genealogical Publishing Company.

Nooter, Willem Frederik (Eric). 1994. Between Heaven and Earth: Church and Society in Pre-Revolutionary Flatbush, Long Island. PhD diss., Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

Paul, Herman. 2010. Who Suffered from the Crisis of Historicism? A Dutch Example. *History and Theory* 49: 169–93.

Pestana, Carla Gardina. 2004. *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Runia, Eelco. 2006. Presence. *History and Theory* 45: 1–29.

Scott, Kenneth and Kenn Stryker-Rodda (eds.). 1974. *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch. Translated and Annotated by Arnold J. F. Van Laer, Volume III: Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1648–1660*. Baltimore: MA: Genealogical Publishing Company.

Shorto, Russell. 2004. *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan and the Forgotten Colony That Shaped America*. New York: Doubleday.

Stokes, Isaac Newton Phelps (ed.). 1915–1928. *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498–1909*, vol. 4. New York: Robert H. Dodd.

Tamburello, Dennis E. 1994. *Union with Christ: John Calvin and the Mysticism of St. Bernard*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

Van der Linde, A. P. G. Jos (ed.) and trans. 1983. *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch. Old First Dutch Reformed Church of Brooklyn, New York. First Book of Records, 1660–1752*. Baltimore, MA: Genealogical Publishing Company.

Van Laer Arnold J. F. (ed.) and trans. 1932. *Correspondence of Jeremias van Rensselaer, 1651–1674*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

——— trans. 1974. *New York Historical Manuscripts: Dutch. Volume III: Register of the Provincial Secretary, 1648–1660*, (ed.) Kenneth Scott and Kenn Stryker-Rodda. Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company.

——— (ed.) and trans. 2008. *Van Rensselaer Bowier Manuscripts, being the Letters of Kiliaen van Rensselaer, 1630–1643, and other Documents Relating to the Colony of Rensselaerswyck*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Voorhees, David William. 2009. Flatbush in the Time of the Van Varicks. In *Dutch New York Between East and West: The World of Margrieta Van Varick*, (eds.) Deborah Krohn and Peter N. Miller, with Marybeth De Filippis. Bard Graduate Center: Decorative Arts, Design History, Material Culture, 83–96. New Haven and London: The New-York Historical Society and Yale University Press.

Walsham, Alexandra. 2011. *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER 8

Paraluther: Explaining an Unexpected Portrait of Paracelsus in Andreas Hartmann's *Curriculum Vitae Lutheri* (1601)

Leigh T. I. Penman

Sometime in 1601, a pirate edition of an account of the life of Martin Luther (1483–1546) appeared on bookstalls in the Holy Roman Empire.[1] Andreas Hartmann's *Erster Theil des curriculi vitae Lutheri* was first printed in Magdeburg in 1600. According to its author, this verse-form drama was written in order to provide its readers with a stirring account of the reformer's early exploits, both to enjoy and, ideally, to emulate. But lurking within the pages of the 1601 reprint was an unexpected and unwelcome surprise. On the second leaf of the text, inserted between Latin and German lines praising Luther as a "divine prophet," was a bold woodcut portrait of a major religious reformer. But this portrait did not depict Luther. Instead it portrayed a figurehead of the Radical Reformation, the infamous Swiss physician Theophrastus von Hohenheim (1493/94–1541), better known as Paracelsus (Fig. 8.1).

This striking anomaly has escaped the notice of scholars who have dedicated their attention to Lutheran and Paracelsian iconography and to the genre of 'Luther dramas' (*Lutherdramen*), as well as those interested in the radical religious subcultures in the Holy Roman Empire of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.[2] Its discovery opens a door into a rarely-glimpsed aspect of early modern history, and begs a host of interesting questions, the consideration of which illuminates circumstances both historical and historiographical. Who was responsible for the insertion, and why? Was the printing a deliberate provocation by a printer inclined to the doctrines of Paracelsus and the radical Paracelsians? A catastrophic case of mistaken identity? Or an exigency of a harried printer? This article examines the background to

1 Andreas Hartmann, *Erster Theil/ des curriculi vitae Lutheri. Das ist: Warhafftige und kurtze historische Beschreibung/ der Geburt und Ankunfft* [. . .] *Martini Lutheri* (n.p: n.p, 1601). Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Shelfmark: 107.16 Eth. (3).

2 See Karl Aberle, *Grabdenkmal, Schädel und Abbildungen des Theophrastus Paracelsus* (Salzburg: H. Dieter, 1891), 498–99; Amelie Zabel, *Lutherdramen des beginnenden 17. Jahrhunderts*. PhD diss., Ludwigs-Maximilians-Universität, Munich, 1911, 5–10.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_010

NAtus es Islebij, diuine Propheta LV-
THERE,
Relligio fulget TE duce, Papa jacet.
LVther: zu Eißlebn bist geboern/
Von Gott ein Prophet außerkoern/
GOTTes Wort leucht nun weit vnd breit/
Durch dich/der Pabst zu bodem leidt.
A ij Aduenit

FIGURE 8.1 *Paracelsus, from Hartmann,* Curriculum vitae Lutheri (*1601*), *sig. A2r, woodcut.*
PHOTO: HERZOG AUGUST BIBLIOTHEK, WOLFENBÜTTEL, SHELFMARK 107.16 ETH. (3).

the publication of Hartmann's *Curriculum vitae Lutheri*. While, ultimately, no conclusive answer may be possible as to why a Paracelsus portrait was used to portray Martin Luther, we can attempt to identify the persons behind its production, and by so doing delve into the radical Paracelsian underground of the period. The investigation is structured in four parts. In part one, I examine the historical comparisons of Paracelsus to Luther, and outline the physician's radical religious endeavours. In the second I briefly discuss the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* and its author, before turning in part three to the puzzle of who was responsible for producing the striking juxtaposition. In the fourth part I provide some conclusions concerning the possible reasons behind the printing of the Paracelsus portrait.

As Charles Zika has emphasized throughout his career, visual images are "powerful agents in the conceptual and communicative processes" of societies, particularly in the early modern period.[3] There is nothing remarkable in the crude portrait of Paracelsus employed in the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* when considered in isolation. However, when we are informed about the context of the volume in which it was printed, and those responsible for the act, as well as the growing contemporary tensions—intellectual and religious—in which Paracelsian works played a key role in fostering the desire for further religious and social reform, the incident provides a tangible testimony to the striking intellectual discords within the Holy Roman Empire at the turn of the seventeenth century.

Paracelsus as Lay Theologian and New Luther

Let us begin, however, with a consideration of the twin figures Luther and Paracelsus, and their complex cultural associations. Luther's legacy as a religious reformer needs no expansion here, but an account of Paracelsus's radical theology and theological reputation is essential to elaborating the background of this incident.[4] The fractious physician of Einsiedeln in the canton of Schwyz was certainly convinced of his own import to the early modern world of letters. He boastfully claimed to followers and opponents alike that he was "greater

3 Charles Zika, Introduction, in his *Exorcising our Demons. Magic, Witchcraft, and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 1–20, see 13.

4 For Paracelsus's biography, see Udo Benzenhöfer, *Paracelsus* (Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1997); Charles Webster, *Paracelsus: Medicine, Magic and Mission at the End of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) and Andrew Weeks, *Paracelsus: Speculative Theory and the Crisis of the Early Reformation* (Albany: SUNY, 1997).

than those to whom you would compare me." His chosen *nom de voyage* Paracelsus—while deriving from his title von Hohenheim—punned on the conviction that the physician believed he was 'greater than Celsus.' Recently, whole volumes have been dedicated to investigating this diverse and elusive figure and his reception.[5] Paracelsus's varied reputation among contemporaries and historians is primarily a result of the difficult and varied nature of his output.[6] Initially a physician by profession, Paracelsus's ambitions extended far beyond the medical realm, and encompassed nearly all areas of contemporary social, cultural, natural-philosophical, and religious inquiry.

It was Paracelsus's public and bold pursuit of the reform of medicine which initially invited comparisons by his friends, followers and admirers to prominent contemporary innovators in other fields, such as the artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), and, of course, Martin Luther. These comparisons were made both explicitly and implicitly, in printed works as well as manuscripts, and were based on perceived similarities of style, endeavor, personality, and reforming ambition.[7] But it was the comparison with Luther that would be the most enduring, and the most controversial.[8] According to at least one—perhaps apocryphal—contemporary, this comparison was invited in part because of a physical resemblance. The Swiss physician "was of average height, of full face with a short thick neck, nearly identical in appearance to Martin Luther, and somewhat like Faust."[9]

---

5 See the essays collected in Ole Peter Grell (ed.), *Paracelsus: The Man and His Reputation, His Ideas and their Transformation* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Joachim Telle (ed.), *Parerga Paracelsica. Paracelsus in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1991); Joachim Telle (ed.), *Analecta Paracelsica. Studien zum Nachleben Theophrast von Hohenheims im deutschen Kulturgebiet der frühen Neuzeit* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994); Heinz Schott and Ilana Zinguer (eds.), *Paracelsus und seine internationale Rezeption in der frühen Neuzeit* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

6 See Charles D. Gunnoe, Jr., "Paracelsus's Biography Among his Detractors," in *Paracelsian Moments: Science, Medicine and Astrology in Early Modern Europe*, (ed.) Gerhild Scholz Williams and Charles D. Gunnoe (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2002), 3–18.

7 See Vivian Nutton, "Der Luther der Medizin: ein paracelsisches Paradoxon," in *Paracelsus. Das Werk, die Rezeption*, (ed.) Volker Zimmerman. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998), 105–13.

8 For some starting points see Hartmut Rudolph, "Einige Gesichtspunkte zum Thema 'Paracelsus und Luther,'" *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 72 (1981): 34–54; Hartmut Rudolph, "Theophrast von Hohenheim (Paracelsus). Arzt und Apostel der neuen Kreatur," in *Radikale Reformatoren*, (ed.) Heinz-Jürgen Goetz. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1978), 231–42.

9 Sven Limbeck, "Paracelsus in einer frühneuzeitlichen Historiensammlung. Die 'Rhapsodia vitae Theophrasti Paracelsi' von Peter Payngk," in *Analecta Paracelsica*, 1–58 at 23: "Ehr [*sc.* Paracelsus] ist völliges angesicht geweßen und schier D[octori] Martino gleich, dem Fausto

Yet while many contemporaries would have been flattered by comparisons to these gifted and influential personalities, Paracelsus took exception to them, precisely in the manner that his motto would suggest: *alterius non sit, qui suus esse potest* (who can be himself, shall not belong to another). In his fittingly-titled *Paragranum* (Against the grain, c. 1530) he lamented the fact that his peers referred to him as the "Luther of the physicians."[10] As Carlos Gilly has pointed out, Paracelsus's ire was raised because he felt the epithet too slight. Unlike the religious Reformer, Paracelsus felt, even if somewhat tongue in cheek, that his own innovations had gone well beyond the creation of "new heresies":

> What is this mockery with which you insult me? Implying that I am a heresiarch by saying that I am the Luther of medicine? I am Theophrastus and greater than those to whom you would compare me.[11]

Paracelsus proudly declared that he would rather bear the title given him by his colleagues and students in Basel in 1527–1528—*Cacophrastus* ("shithead" or "shitmouth")—than that of "Luther of medicine" (*Luther medicorum*).[12] And although he claimed that he would therefore "let Luther tend to his matters," and that he himself would concentrate on his own medical endeavors, this was mere bluster. For, secretly, during this same period, Paracelsus was already at work upon a substantial corpus of incendiary theological writings—prophetic works, biblical commentaries, devotional writings, sermons, and meditations on the sacraments—which demonstrates that he was not at all satisfied to leave the matter of spiritual reform to Martin Luther.

Raised as a Catholic, Paracelsus was naturally caught up in the turbulent events of the Reformation. His path through this tumultuous period, however, was unique. The bitter debates concerning reform after 1517 between Luther and his opponents, and later Luther and his own evangelical colleagues, made it clear to Paracelsus that the individual must forge his own way through the

---

halber, aber einen dicken kurtzen halß gehabt und eine mittelmeßige lenge." I thank Grantley McDonald for bringing this passage to my attention. See further Urs Leo Gantenbein, "Converging Legends: Faustus, Paracelsus, and Trithemius," in *The Faustian Century: New Studies on the Intersection of Literature, Theology, and Nature Theory*, (eds.) Andrew Weeks and J. M. van der Laan (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012), 93–123.

10 Paracelsus, "Liber Paragranum," in *Sämtliche Werke. Erste Abteilung. Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften*, (eds.) Karl Sudhoff and Wilhelm Matthießen (Munich and Berlin: Otto Barth, 1922–1929), vol. 8, 63.

11 Ibid., 62–63.

12 Ibid., 43.

religious debates of the day. All institutionalized religious confessions and sects, Paracelsus believed, be they Catholic or Lutheran, Schwenkfeldian or Calvinist, Zwinglian or Anabaptist, were mere *Steinkirchen* or *Mauerkirchen*; churches of 'mere walls' possessing no true spiritual authority. According to Paracelsus, the problem was age old. In an undated letter attributed to Paracelsus by contemporaries, the physician supposedly lamented that the tenets of true Christianity had been obscured by an avaricious *Mauerkirche* before the birth of the institutionalized church itself:

> I believe that the visible (*eüsserlich*) church of Christ, with all its teachings, donations (*gaaben*) and sacraments, was corrupted and destroyed by Antichrist less than an hour after the last of the apostles was taken up to heaven. Since spirit and truth thus remained hidden, I am convinced that for 1,400 years there have been no [legitimate] physical churches, nor sacraments.[13]

The religious debates of the century of reformation were therefore moribund and pointless exercises in sophistry. All were aimed, according to Paracelsus, toward the propagation of new 'sects' intent on demonstrating their own righteousness, entirely in ignorance of eternal, godly truths.[14]

Paracelsus therefore believed it was necessary for the true Christian to cultivate an internal religious life based on contemplation, prayer, and penance.[15] And he unfolded his theological system in numerous theological tracts—the modern scholarly edition of the theological writings, when complete, will occupy some fourteen volumes—which forced their own way between Catholic and Protestant dogmas alike, in search of the true faith of the eternal invisible church, which, according to the physician's chiliastic eschatology, would

---

13 Pseudo-Paracelsus [i.e. Sebastian Franck], "Schreiben ahn einen glertten [. . .]" (n.d.) cited in Carlos Gilly, " 'Theophrastia Sancta.' Der Paracelsismus als Religion im Streit mit den offiziellen Kirchen," in *Analecta Paracelsica* (see above, n. 5), 428, footnote 8. For the fascinating history of this document, which was actually a letter written by the radical reformer Sebastian Franck to Johannes Campanus on 4 February 1531, see Wilhelm Kühlmann and Joachim Telle (eds.), *Corpus Paracelsisticum Band III. Der Frühparacelsismus* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 300–12.

14 See Gilly, "Theophrastia Sancta," 428–29.

15 A penetrating summary of Paracelsus's theology and its driving principles may be found in the entry concerning Paracelsus by Udo Benzenhöfer and Urs Leo Gantenbein, in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, (ed.) Wouter J. Hanegraaff et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2005), vol. 2, 922–31.

achieve its final form in an imminent golden age.[16] These works, Paracelsus hoped, would comprise a *prodromus* or herald to the true spiritual lights of grace and of nature, enlightening those who sought guidance merely from the 'dead letter' of scripture. In this respect, Paracelsus did not aim to establish himself—as other radical reformers had done—as a new messiah, but merely to demonstrate to the world that a path of true spirituality did indeed exist outside the so-called *Mauerkirchen*.

Paracelsus was nothing if not shrewd. As his writings radicalized, the physician became cognizant of the potentially fatal consequences that awaited him should his name become linked to his theological corpus. He thus refused to set them in print, and took pains to deposit his manuscripts only with trusted friends and associates. This substantial body of material was subsequently prized, copied, collected, and distributed within epistolary and interpersonal networks by a small but organized coterie of sympathetic followers both during Paracelsus' lifetime and after his death.[17] As several historians have demonstrated in great detail, this corpus was well received among networks of associates and correspondents already on the margins of religious orthodoxy—among Schwenckfelders, for example, as well as disaffected Catholics and Lutherans—where Paracelsus's doctrines attracted ever more adherents to the message of an eternal, spiritual church.[18]

During the final decades of the sixteenth century, these prophetic and religious writings, energized by the convictions of their readers, eventually formed the basis of a religious movement that was called the *Theophrastia sancta* by several of its adherents. Paracelsian religious convictions found expression

16 The majority of these tracts are collected and edited in the still incomplete edition of Paracelsus's theological works, of which only six of the planned twelve volumes of text have appeared, along with an index volume: *Sämtliche Schriften. Zweiter Abteilung. Theologische und religionsphilosophische Schriften*, (ed.) Kurt Goldammer, 7 vols. (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1955–1995). This edition has been abandoned, with the remaining theological writings to be published in eight volumes under Gantenbein's editorship. The first volume has appeared as Paracelsus, *Theologische Schriften. Vita Beata*, (ed.) Urs Leo Gantenbein (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008).

17 Gilly, "Theophrastia Sancta," 425–88, especially 429–73; Heinz-Peter Mielke, "Schwenkfeldianer im Hofstaat Bischof Marquards von Speyer (1560–1581)," *Archiv für Mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte* 28 (1976): 77–83; Karl Sudhoff, *Versuch einer Kritik der Eechtheit der Paracelsischen Schriften. II Theil. Paracelsische Handschriften* (Berlin: Reimer, 1899); Leigh T. I. Penman, " 'Ein Liebhaber des Mysterii, und ein grosser Verwandter desselben.' Toward the Life of Balthasar Walther: Kabbalist, Alchemist and Wandering Paracelsian Physician," *Sudhoffs Archiv* 94/1 (2010): 73–99.

18 Gilly, "Theophrastia Sancta," 439–40.

not only in cultures of collection, copying, reading and distribution of theological *Paracelsica*, but also in manuscript works such as Paul Linck's "Rechter Bericht von den dreyen Seculis" (1599–1602),[19] and of course in print: Samuel Eisenmenger's *Cyclopaedia Paracelsica Christiania* (1585) being among the most noteworthy and influential of the Paracelsian books to draw on the suppressed manuscript tradition.[20]

By the time of the publication of Hartmann's *Curriculum vitæ Lutheri* in 1601, there thus already existed a robust tradition of comparison which linked Paracelsus and Luther. These comparisons could be based on each man's attempts to initiate reform in their respective fields of endeavor, or indeed on a dissenting religious tradition which saw Paracelsus as a religious reformer even greater than Luther himself.

Andreas Hartmann (c. 1540–c. 1600) and the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri*

The first edition of the *Erster Theil des curriculi vitae Lutheri*, numbering 178 pages in small quarto, was published by its author in Magdeburg in 1600.[21] As its title indicates, the volume was the first of a projected three-part account of Luther's life, and detailed the Reformer's exploits from his birth in Eisleben in 1483 until his imprisonment in the Wartburg in 1521. Although now considered an undistinguished pseudo-hagiography, the book excited much attention among contemporaries. In addition to the pirate reprint of 1601—which provides an excellent indicator of commercial appeal—the drama was reprinted in Halle in 1624.[22] Additionally, at least one manuscript copy was made by an early seventeenth-century reader, which may hint at a quick exhaustion of

19 Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS 981 Helmst.

20 [Samuel Eisenmenger], *Cyclopaedia Paracelsica Christiana* [...] ([Straßburg]: [Jobin], 1585).

21 Andreas Hartmann, *Erster Theil, des curriculi Vitæ Lutheri. Das ist: Warhafftige und kurtze Historische Beschreibung, der Geburt und Ankunfft* [...] *des* [...] *Martini Lutheri / Jetzo gantz Neu Inn etlichen* [...] *Comödien repræsentiret* (Magdeburg: In Verlegung des Autoris, 1600). Oxford, Bodleian Library, Tr. Luth. 154; Weimar, Herzog Anna Amalia Bibliothek, O 9: 314.

22 Andreas Hartmann, *Lutherus Redivivus, Das ist: Eine warhaffte Beschreibung/ der Geburth/ Ankunfft/ Lehr/ Lebens/ Beruffs* [...] *des* [...] *Martini Lutheri* [...] (Halle: Peter Schmidt, 1624).

stock in the German literary marketplace.[23] Furthermore, Hartmann's book was mercilessly plagiarized by later Luther-dramatists, the most famous example being the extensive appropriations of Martin Rinckart.[24]

Hartmann was born in Herzberg, in the margraviate of Brandenburg, around 1540.[25] In 1586 he was a subnotary in the Lutheran consistory in Dresden, before taking up a position as chancery secretary in Merseburg, near Leipzig, in 1593. There he remained until around 1599, when he returned to Dresden.[26] As well as possessing a diplomatic genius for administration, Hartmann was an enthusiastic dramatist and correspondent.[27] He devoted much of his spare time to composing dramatic works and verse-form historical texts, most dedicated to his major patrons, the Saxon electors. The earliest theatrical work that we know of is the *Amadis*, printed and performed in Dresden in 1587. In 1600, Hartmann published two works. The first, *Vom zustande im himmel und in der hellen*, was an adaptation of the folk-tale concerning 'treuer Eckhardt,' who was said to have warned the township of Schwarza of the approach of the armies of hell.[28] The second was the first edition of the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* itself, which indeed featured a portrait of Martin Luther (Fig. 8.2). Both were issued with an electoral Saxon printing privilege, which protected these works against pirate editions for a period of ten years.

Hartmann's dedicatory epistle, dated 8 April 1600, is addressed to a bevy of Saxon political and religious top brass. It makes clear that Hartmann was a long-standing recipient of financial support from the Saxon court, which apparently had agreed to cover the costs of publishing the book. However, given that the *Curriculum vitae* had been complete for more than a year and was languishing in Hartmann's study, the author had chosen to set the work before the public

23 Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Cgm 4967 (7). The *Abschrift* is based on the edition of 1600, and does not contain a portrait.

24 Martin Rinckart, *Der Eißlebische Christliche Ritter: Eine newe und schöne/ Geistliche Comoedia* [...] (Eisleben: Rinckart, 1613); Erich Michael, *Martin Rinckart als Dramatiker* (Leipzig: Hofmmann, 1894), 9–11.

25 Wilhelm Scherer, "Hartmann, Andreas," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (Leipzig: Duncker, 1875–1912), vol. 10, 680; Moritz Fürstenau, *Zur Geschichte der Musik und des Theaters am Hofe zu Dresden. Nach archivalischen Quellen*, 2 vols. (Dresden: Verlagsbuchhandlung von Rudolf Kuntze, 1861), I, 60–80.

26 Fürstenau, *Geschichte*, I, 60.

27 Hartmann's correspondence on notarial matters between 1583 and 1591 is preserved in Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, MSS Chart A 110–111.

28 Andreas Hartmann, *Vom zustande im himmel und in der hellen* [...] (Magdeburg: In Verlegung des Autoris, 1600).

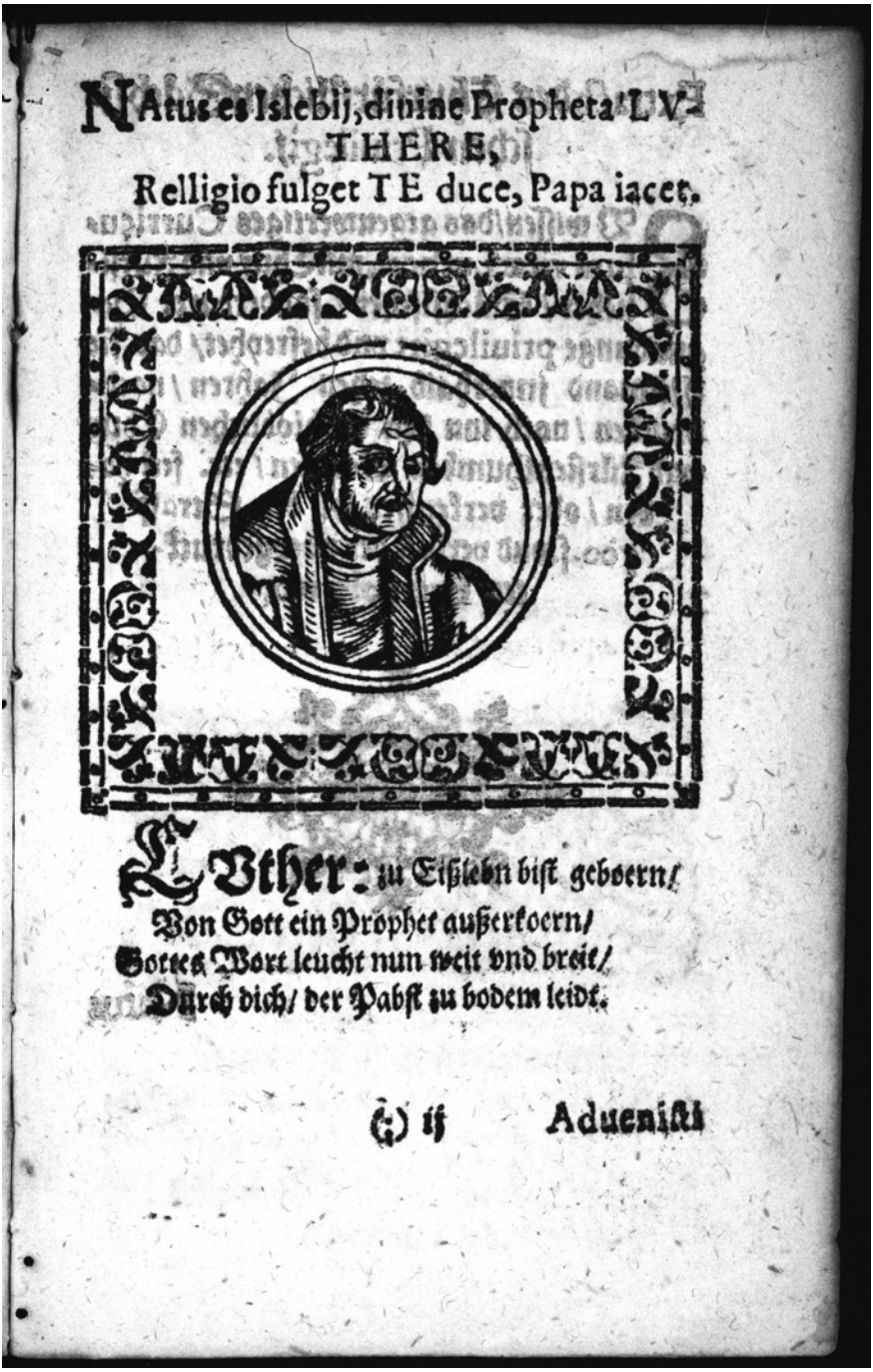
NAtus es Islebij, divine Propheta LV-
THERE,
Relligio fulget TE duce, Papa iacet.
LVther: zu Eißleben biſt geboern/
Von Gott ein Prophet außerkoern/
Gottes Wort leucht nun weit vnd breit/
Durch dich/ der Pabſt zu bodem leidt.
(:) ij Aduenisti

FIGURE 8.2 *Martin Luther, from Hartmann,* Curriculum vitæ Lutheri (*1600*), *sig.* (:)*ii*^{r}, *woodcut.* PHOTO: IMAGING SERVICES, BODLEIAN LIBRARY, OXFORD.

"as my own publisher and at my own [financial] disadvantage."[29] Hartmann's compulsion was partially explained in his introduction to the volume. There, he claimed to have recently noticed a great number of people ignoring scripture and being ungrateful towards God.[30] This disrespect even extended to God's own divine prophet, Luther. Reflecting on the indignities to which Luther's name and legacy had been subjected by his opponents, Hartmann remarked that some enemies of Luther had not only blasphemed the reformer's words and deeds, but had also stooped so low as to disrespect his very image (*Bildnis*).[31] It was in order to protect and burnish Luther's legacy, and lead readers back to the right path, that Hartmann had written and published his book.

Where and by Whom was the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* (1601) Published?

Hartmann died in or around 1600; he therefore could not have acted as publisher of the 1601 edition, which must therefore be considered a pirate printing. It is improbable in any event that Hartmann would have advocated the inclusion of the Paracelsus portrait in place of his beloved Luther. But where, then, and by whom, was the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* (1601) published?

In theory, the task of identifying when, where and by whom a book printed in the Holy Roman Empire around 1600 was produced should be a straightforward matter. Imperial laws mandating a minimum formula of information to appear on the title-page of a printed work—the name of its author, as well as place and year of publication—were supplemented by local laws often requiring the submission of all printed works to censors, either prior or subsequent to publication, for approval.[32] Such regulations were deliberately designed to stymie the production of pirate editions, as well as heterodox and libelous works (*Famosschriften*), and, where such works did appear in print, to allow authorities to quickly identify the responsible parties. The regulations were therefore an important tool for ensuring accountability within the

29 Hartmann, *Curriculum vitae Lutheri*, fol. A6 verso.

30 Ibid., fols A2 recto–A2 verso.

31 Ibid., fol. A4 recto.

32 Ulrich Eisenhardt, *Die kaiserliche Aufsicht über Buchdruck, Buchhandel und Presse im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation (1496–1806). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Bücher- und Pressezensur* (Karlsruhe: C. F. Müller, 1970).

contemporary printing industry.[33] However the system of censorship was not efficiently enforced, nor did all members of the book trade habitually comply.[34]

Frustratingly, the title-page of the 1601 edition of Hartmann's book is devoid of information concerning publisher, printer or place of printing—these omissions all hallmarks of a pirate edition—and it simply relates that the book was "printed in 1601" (*Gedruckt im Jahr, Anno 1601*). A typographical comparison of the 1601 edition with the first edition of 1600 indicates that the book was not, like its predecessor, printed in Magdeburg. A glance at the usual bibliographical sources offers little additional guidance concerning those responsible. The edition is not listed in the Frankfurt and Leipzig book fair catalogues for 1601 or 1602, which sometimes identified printers and publishers not indicated on the title-pages of the books in question.[35] Nor is it listed in the near-contemporary bibliographical catalogues of Georg Draud (issued in 1611 and 1625) or the "Catalogus omnium bibliopolarum, 1540–1626," a manuscript inventory compiled from bookseller catalogues in 1682.[36]

Fortunately, the Paracelsus portrait (Fig. 8.1) provides a major, and as it turns out, decisive clue. Its model was provided by the famous profile portrait of the physician, created in 1538 by the monogrammist 'A.H.', albeit transmitted through an intermediary portrait created by Balthasar Jenichen in 1572.[37] It is unlikely that the Paracelsus portrait was used solely in Hartmann's *Curriculum vitae Lutheri*, and sure enough, Karl Aberle's catalogue of Paracelsus portraits

33 Hans-Peter Hasse, "Bücherzensur an der Universität Wittenberg im 16. Jahrhundert," in *700 Jahre Wittenberg: Stadt—Universität—Reformation*, (ed.) Stephan Oehmig (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1995), 206–7.

34 See Walter Friedensburg (ed.), *Urkundbuch der Universität Wittenberg. Teil 1. 1502–1611* (Magdeburg: Selbstverlag der Historischen Kommission für die Provinz Sachsen und für Anhalt, 1926), 705, which documents the reactions of printers in Leipzig and Wittenberg to proposals for a rejuvenated censorial procedure in Saxony in 1606.

35 See the database of book fair catalogues, 1594–1691: *Catalogus universalis, sive designatio omnium librorum, qui hisce nundinis* [...] *Francofurtensibus & Lipsiensibus anni* [...] *vel novi, vel emendatiores & auctiores prodierunt*, (Göttingen: Olms, 2007). <http://www.olmsonline.de/purl?PPN525616772 >. (Accessed 4 September 2012).

36 Georg Draud, *Bibliotheca librorum Germanicorum classica* [...] (Frankfurt/Mayn: Kopff, 1611, second revised ed. 1625); Halle, Universitätsbibliothek, MS ThSGV 3126.

37 Until recently, 'A.H.' was believed to have been Augustin Hirschvogel. See Joseph Strebel, "Ist Augustin Hirschvogel der Monogrammist der authentischen Bildnisse von Paracelsus?" *Nova Acta Paracelsica*, 3 (1946): 133–46; Ingonda Hannesschläger, "Echte und vermeintliche Porträts des Paracelsus," in *Paracelsus und Salzburg*, (eds.) Heinz Dopsch and Peter F. Kramml (Salzburg: Gesellschaft für Salzburger Landeskunde, 1994), 217–50. The image is available online at http://www.portraitindex.de/dokumente/html/obj33900025 (Accessed 4 September 2012).

includes mention of a "crude" (*derbe*) bust portrait of the physician which appeared on the title-page verso of the first volume of an alchemical collection titled *Avrevm vellvs oder Güldin Schatz und Kunstkammer* [...] *sampt andern Philosophischen alter vnnd newer Scribenten sonderbaren Tractetlein* (printed in 1599 or 1600).[38] A comparison of the portrait in the *Avrevm vellus* with that in Hartmann's book makes it immediately clear that, despite some minor intermediate damage to the border, both impressions derived from the very same woodblock.[39] It is thus almost certain that the *Avrevm vellvs*, as well as the Hartmann volume, were printed at the same press; a suspicion further borne out by comparison of the identical typefaces, and similar foliation marks of each publication.

The *Avrevm vellvs* of 1600 was, however, also a pirate edition. Its imprint indicates solely that the book was first printed in Rorschach on the Bodensee (*Erstlich gedruckt zu Rorschach am Bodensee*), and indeed the text was first issued there by Leonhard Straub in 1598.[40] A comparison of the typefaces, however, shows that the 1600 edition was not printed by Straub. Fortunately in 1625 Georg Draud indicated that the third part of the 1600 edition of the *Avrevm vellvs* was issued by the Leipzig bookseller, publisher and patrician, Henning Große the Elder (1553–1621).[41] In his *Bibliographia Paracelsica* (1894), the great medical historian Karl Sudhoff was able to go one step further. There, Sudhoff established that a set of signatures printed for the pirate edition of the *Avrevm vellvs* were later bodily re-used in yet another collection of alchemical

38 *Avrevm vellvs oder Güldin Schatz und Kunstkammer* [...] *sampt andern Philosophischen alter vnnd newer Scribenten sonderbaren Tractetlein* (n.p., n.p., 1599/1600); Karl Sudhoff, *Bibliographia Paracelsica. Besprechung der unter Hohenheims Namen 1527–1893 erschienenen Druckschriften* (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1894), 429–30, no. 247. Further on this work see Joachim Telle, "Der Splendor Solis in der frühneuzeitlichen Respublica Alchemica," *Daphnis* 35, 3/4 (2006): 434–38.

39 The portrait as it appears in the *Avrevm vellvs* may be viewed online courtesy of the Deutsche Fotothek, Dresden: http://www.deutschefotothek.de/obj88967322.html (Accessed 19 September 2013).

40 Sudhoff, *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, 424–27.

41 Georg Draud, *Bibliotheca librorum Germanicorum Classica* [...] (Frankfurt/Mayn: Oster, 1625), 372. Concerning Große see Jakob Franck, "Große, Henning," in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 9 (1879), 748–749; Adalbert Brauer, "Große, Henning," in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 7 (1966), 147–148; Christoph Reske, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet. Auf der Grundlage des gleichnamigen Werkes von Josef Benzing* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 529; Joseph Benzing, "Die deutschen Verleger des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Eine Neubearbeitung," *Archiv für Geschichte des Deutschen Buchwesens* 18 (1977): 1149–50.

writings issued by Große in Leipzig; Joachim Tancke's (1557–1609) posthumously published *Promptuarium alchemiae* (1610–1614).[42] This reutilization led Sudhoff to suggest that the entirety of the 1600 edition of the *Avrevm vellvs*, and not just the third tract, was in fact published by Große. This suspicion can be confirmed by a typographical comparison of the several volumes.

The balance of bibliographical and typographical evidence therefore suggests that Hartmann's *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* (1601) was published in Leipzig at the presses of Henning Große. Interestingly, an anonymous seventeenth-century manuscript note, found on a specimen of the portrait page of the 1601 edition preserved in the "Reformation Portraits Collection" of Cornell University Library, provides additional—albeit untestable—evidence for Große's responsibility. This note identifies the *Curriculum vitae* as being issued in Leipzig, albeit with the incorrect publication date of 1600. The printer and publisher are not named.[43]

Mistaken Identity, Printer's Exigency, or Deliberate Provocation?

The chief question that remains is why the Paracelsus portrait was employed in a book about Luther in the first place. Was it a case of mistaken identity? An exigency of a harried printer? Or was it indeed a deliberate provocation, which drew upon the traditions of comparison between Paracelsus and Luther in the realms of medicine and religious reform?

Before addressing these questions, let us consider more closely the book's publisher. Born into a Saxon book family, Henning Große possessed a deep interest in alchemy and magic, and a personal history of religious irregularity. In addition to printing and publishing books on medicine, prophecy and

42 Sudhoff, *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, 430; Joachim Tancke, *Promptuarium alchemiae, Das ist: Vornehmer gelarten und Alchimisten Schrifften und Tractat/ von dem Stein der Weisen* 2 vols. (Leipzig: Große, 1610–1614). The insertion occurs in the second volume, where the pagination leaps from 368 to 379 and continues to the end of the volume at 701 (signatures Aa-Xx); Karl R. H. Frick, "Einleitung," in Tancke, *Promptuarium alchemiae*, 2 vols. (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlaganstalt, 1976), sheds no light on the matter. The text has also been attributed to Johann Thölde.

43 Ithaca, Cornell University, Reformation Portraits, Rare BR327R33++, box 1–85, no. 31 with the MS remark: 'Curriculum vitae Lutheri et Comoediae, Leipzig, AD 1600, von Andreas Hartmann.' See further *Catalogue of the Historical Library of Andrew Dickson White. I. The Protestant Reformation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1889), 97. I thank Laurent Ferri of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Cornell University Library, for examining this portrait on my behalf.

alchemical subjects, he also authored a two volume history of magic, first issued in 1597, along with a volume on *Tragica*, which also considered heresy and conjuring.[44] In 1592 Große was expelled from the Leipzig city council having come under suspicion of Crypto-Calvinism. Yet the printer remained a respected citizen, renowned for his generous philanthropic spirit; his evident inclination toward printing and selling pirate editions of successful alchemical and dramatic books notwithstanding. He counted prominent Lutheran divines among his closest friends, and he appears not to have possessed any direct connections to radical Paracelsians in Saxony, despite his alchemical contacts. It is perhaps fitting that an anonymous eighteenth-century portrait would depict Große alongside busts of the Greek grammarian Tryphon (ca. 60–10 BCE), Johannes Gutenberg (ca. 1400–1468), and the legendary Dr. Faust.[45]

However, although Große owned typographical materials since at least 1596 and in 1601 established a dedicated workshop (*Offizin*) in Leipzig equipped with its own presses, he was not trained as a printer, and employed a specialist typesetter (*Faktor*) to print works he published.[46] As the application of the Paracelsus woodblock onto the pages of the *Curriculum vitae* occurred at the printing press itself, we must also consider the background, inclinations and character of Große's master typesetter, who at this time appears to have been Bartholomäus Hörnig (d. 1608).[47] Hörnig hailed from Schwäbisch Hall, in southern Germany, and established a printery in Eisleben, in the county of Mansfeld, sometime before 1595. In addition to this workshop, he also sometimes operated Große's Leipzig presses. There is evidence to suggest that Hörnig may have also been inclined towards Paracelsian philosophy. Hörnig was born in the same town as one of the chief proponents of the *Theophrastia sancta*, Benedikt Figulus (1567–after 1619), and was befriended by the Hessen

44 Henning Große, *Magica, seu mirabilium historiarum de spectris et apparitionibus spiritvvm* [...] 2 vols. (Eisleben: Große, 1597); Idem, *Magica, Dasz ist: Wunderbarliche Historien Von Gespensten vnd mancherley Erscheinungen der Geister* [...], 3 vols. (Eisleben: Große, 1598); Idem, *Tragica, seu tristium historiarum de poenis criminalibvs et exitv horribili* [...] (Eisleben: Große, 1598).

45 Conrad Geßner, *Die so nothig als nützlich Buchdruckerkunst und Schriftgießerey* (Leipzig, 1740), vol. 1, 105, viewable online at: http://www.portraitindex.de/dokumente/html/obj33707854 (Accessed 19 September 2013).

46 Reske, *Buchdrucker*, 529; Benzing, "Die deutschen Verleger," 1149–50.

47 Concerning Hörnig see Wilhelm German, *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Schwäbisch Hall bis Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Schwäbisch Hall: Heitz, 1916), 126–27; Reske, *Buchdrucker*, 188, 529; Benzing, "Verleger," 1149.

alchemist, salinist and Paracelsian Johannes Thölde (c. 1565–c. 1614).[48] In 1596 and 1597, Hörnig printed three versions of a German translation of the Paracelsian Bernard Gilles Penot's (1519–1617) blandly-titled *Tractatus varii* (Frankfurt 1594) under the rather more interesting moniker *Theophrastisch vade mecum*, one of these as a pirate edition.[49] The publisher of this volume was the infamous Johann Francke (c. 1547–1625) of Magdeburg, an opportunistic pirate publisher who would later issue the suppressed theological works of the dissident Zschopau pastor and follower of Paracelsus, Valentin Weigel (1533–1588).[50] The work was dedicated by its translator, a certain Johann Lange (fl. 1596–1604), to Katharina of Brandenburg-Küstrin (1549–1602). This dedication was signed on St. Bartholomew's day 1596 in Eisleben, and may possibly have been written at Hörnig's home or workshop.[51] In 1599, Hörnig also printed the first collection of writings by the fictional alchemical adept, Basil Valentine.[52] As Hermann Geyer has written, during the 1590s Eisleben became "an important printing location and perhaps also communication point (*Umschlagplatz*) for hermetic-alchemical and magical writings," largely on account of Hörnig's activity.[53]

Let us return to the three possibilities concerning the publication of the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri.* Of these, the first, that of mistaken identity, seems the least probable. Given the literate and visual culture of late sixteenth-century

48 Hans Gerhard Lenz, *Johann Thölde, ein Paracelsist und Chymicus und seine Beziehungen zu Landgraf Moritz von Hessen-Kassel*, PhD diss., Universität Marburg, 1981.

49 See Sudhoff, *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, 420–1, 423, 424 nos. 238, 242, 243. Another edition was issued in 1606, in which Lange complained about Hörnig's pirated version (see Sudhoff, *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, 474–474, no. 278).

50 Albert Kirchhoff, "Ein speculative Buchhändler alter Zeit: Johann Francke in Magdeburg," *Archiv für Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels* 13 (1890), 128–45; Benzing, "Verleger," 1135, 1255; Reske, *Buchdrucker*, 587.

51 The text was printed under the pseudonym Johannes Hippodamus Cheruscum. For the identification of the author see Karl Christoph Schmieder, *Geschichte der Alchemie* (Halle: Waisenhaus Verlag, 1832), 150; Sudhoff, *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, 420. Kühlmann and Telle, *Corpus Paracelsisticum*, vol. 3, 570, note 2 appear not to accept the attribution to Lange.

52 [Johann Thölde?], *Ein Kurtz Summarischer Tractat, Fratris Basilij Valentini Benedicter Ordens/ Von dem grossen Stein der Uralten* [. . .] (Eisleben: Hörnig, 1599). See further Claus Priesner, "Johann Thoelde und die Schriften des Basilius Valentinus," in *Die Alchemie in der europäischen Kultur- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, (ed.) Christoph Meckel (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986), 107–18.

53 Hermann Geyer, *Verborgene Weisheit: Johann Arndts "Vier Bücher vom wahren Christenthum" als Programm einer spiritualistisch-hermetischen Theologie*, 3 vols (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001), vol. 3, 428–29.

Lutheranism, it seems unlikely to me that a professional printer in Leipzig or Eisleben—Luther's birthplace—whatever their confessional background, would not have been able to recognize Luther, or at least that the subject of the portrait was *not* Luther.[54] Whether general readers would also have been able to recognize Luther is a different question. The fact that seemingly no contemporaries remarked on the Paracelsus portrait suggests that few people noticed that Luther was not depicted. Alternatively it might suggest that some copies of the pirate edition contained Luther portraits. Both extant portrait pages from the 1601 edition that are known to me, however, depict Paracelsus.[55] Still, few people, I suggest, would have been able to recognize Paracelsus by sight, for the rich iconographical tradition attached to him, thoroughly documented by Karl Aberle in 1891, was largely confined to specialist medical and alchemical publications outside the reach, and interest, of the general population.

The second possibility, that of exigency, is altogether more plausible. Hörnig may have simply required a portrait, any portrait, in order to finish the book and get it onto the stands. Unable to acquire a usable woodblock of Luther at short notice from a colleague—a contingency which might also have risked revealing his responsibility for the pirated edition—the Paracelsus portrait may have been employed simply because it was at hand. The reuse of woodblocks in multiple publications, of varying appropriateness, is not unusual for the period. Nevertheless, mere exigency does not seem an adequate explanation. Hörnig was an experienced printer of alchemical and medical tracts, and was probably aware of the controversy surrounding Paracelsus. Discovery by censors of the Paracelsian *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* might have meant subjection to stringent penalties, which he surely would not have risked for the simple sake of a false portrait.

The third possibility is that the juxtaposition was deliberate. As such, the use of the portrait might have been inspired by the various traditions which linked Paracelsus to Luther. In the first sense, the juxtaposition may have been a *ludibrium* on the notion of Paracelsus as the 'Luther of medicine.' In the second sense, it may have been intended as an iconoclastic provocation, drawing on the intellectual tradition of the *Theophrastia sancta*, the devotees of which saw Paracelsus as a new Luther, and indeed a 'divine prophet.' If Hörnig intended to play upon the notion of the 'Luther of medicine' then the joke was droll and,

54 See Robert Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*, second edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

55 It is perhaps noteworthy in this regard that the seventeenth-century annotator of the image in the collection of Cornell University Library also did not remark upon the incongruity of the image.

as outlined above, potentially costly. Yet on the whole, circumstantial evidence concerning the networks of the radical Paracelsian movement before 1600, as well as Hörnig's personal proclivities—however sketchily mapped out by the presently available sources—lends weight to the notion that the inclusion of the portrait was intended as a kind of iconoclastic provocation.

Henning Große's Leipzig, where it seems the 1601 edition of Hartmann's *Curriculum vitæ Lutheri* was published was, alongside nearby Halle and Magdeburg, one of the centres and marketplaces of radical Paracelsian intrigue in Saxony and the Empire.[56] While the influence of the strictly orthodox Lutheran university in Leipzig and their censorial efforts appears to have had a diluting effect on the amount of heterodox material actually printed there—at least openly—the city was nevertheless home to a thriving community of Paracelsians and sympathisers with connections to the local book trade, who engaged in the trade and discussion of all manner of alchemical, iatrochemical and heterodox material.[57] Through the agency of Leipzig publishers, these book networks extended to Eisleben, which indeed was one of the major venues for the printing of alchemical literature during the 1590s and 1600s.

Conclusion

The pirate edition of Hartmann's *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* (1601) was published in Leipzig by the firm of Henning Große, whose master printer, Bartholomäus Hörnig of Eisleben, appears to have possessed significant connections to alchemical and radical Paracelsian circles. Further research on Hörnig and his milieu in Eisleben will undoubtedly assist in shedding further light on

56 See Ulrich Bubenheimer, "Orthodoxie—Heterodoxie—Kryptoheterodoxie in der nachreformatorischen Zeit am Beispiel des Buchmarkts in Wittenberg, Halle und Tübingen," in *700 Jahre Wittenberg. Stadt, Universität, Reformation*, (ed.) Stephan Oehmig (Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1995), 257–74.

57 A thorough study of the heterodox milieu in Leipzig during this period is yet to appear. See however Udo Benzenhöfer, "Joachim Tancke (1557–1609). Leben und Werk eines Leipziger Paracelsisten," in: *Paracelsus und Paracelsisten. Vorträge 1984/85*, (ed.) Sepp Domandl (Vienna: Paracelsus-Gesellschaft, 1987), 9–81; Siegfried Wollgast, "Paracelsus und Paracelsisten in Sachsen," *Manuskripte—Thesen—Informationen* 5/1 (1994), 16–23; Joachim Telle, "Benedictus Figulus. Zu Leben und Werk eines deutschen Paracelsisten," *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 22 (1987): 303–29; as well as the pertinent discussion in Julius Otto Opel, *Valentin Weigel. Ein Beitrag zur Literatur- und Culturgeschichte Deutschlands im 17. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig: T. O. Weigel, 1864), 71–87.

this incident, as well as the networks of radical Paracelsianism in Saxony and the county of Mansfeld more generally. More typographical work on Große's heretofore overlooked career as a printer of pirated books will also open up a small but important new area in German book history. Further investigation in libraries and collections 'off the beaten path' may also turn up further copies of the 1601 pirate edition, which will aid in determining whether any exemplars contained a portrait of Luther; and allow more substantial opportunities to reflect on the topic of visual recognition of the major reformers, radical and magisterial, at the turn of the seventeenth century.

Whether or not the printing of the Paracelsus portrait in the *Curriculum vitae Lutheri* ultimately proves to have been intended as an act of provocative iconoclasm, the incident nonetheless serves as an emblematic harbinger of the wave of heterodox sentiments that would find open expression within the Holy Roman Empire in the decades after 1601.[58] During this time, prompted by religious, philosophical, social and economic hardships, which reached their zenith in the disastrous outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, several 'new prophets'—figures such as Adam Haslmayr, Benedictus Figulus, Helisaeus Röslin, Wilhelm Eo Neuheuser, Paul Nagel, Paul Felgenhauer, Philip Ziegler and others—began to spread prophecies concerning an imminent chiliastic Golden Age. According to one anonymous contemporary, the origin of these satanic and gruesome errors was none other than the writings of the "magician king" (*der zeuberer Monarch*) Paracelsus.[59] Another theologian declared that a "clandestine and seditious conspiracy *contra magistratum politicum*" was afoot.[60] The concerns of panicked theologians were, however exaggerated, nevertheless based on the irrefutable existence of smaller, vocal networks and subcultures who collected and copied Paracelsus's writings, or were indirectly inspired by his doctrines of a 'School of the Holy Spirit' which existed in distinction to the *Mauerkirche*. Among them we might count the persons responsible for the iconoclastic provocation in Hartmann's *Curriculum vitae Lutheri*, who appear to have believed that Paracelsus was a divine prophet and Luther's

58 For a survey, see Leigh T. I. Penman, *Unanticipated Millenniums. Chiliastic Thought in Post-Reformation Lutheranism, 1600–1630* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2015).

59 [Anonymous], *Grundtlicher Beweiß wie Theophrastus Paracelsus, Valentinus Weigel, Paulus Felgenhauer, Nicolaus Tetinge und andere ihres gleichen/ mit grosser Heucheley/ mit groben Lesterungen/ und mit falschen Weissagungen umbgehen* (n.p.: n.p., 1634), 32.

60 Valentin Grießmann, [. . .] *Getrewer Eckhart/ Welcher in den ersten Neun gemeinen Fragen/ der Wiedertäufferischen/ Stenckfeldischen/ Weigelianischen/ und Calvino-Photinianischen/ Rosen Creutzerischen Ketzereyen/ im Landen herumbstreichende und streiffende wüste Heer zu fliehen/ und als seelenmörderische Räuberey zu meyden verwarnet* (Gera: Andreas Mamitzsch, 1623), 185 [i.e. 193].

equal. As for the iconoclast Paracelsus himself, he would no doubt have been delighted at the incident, even though he would still have remained convinced that he was greater than Luther—*Paraluther*.

References

Archival Sources

Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, MSS Chart A 110–111.

Halle, Universitätsbibliothek, MS ThSGV 3126.

Ithaca, Cornell University, Reformation Portraits, Rare BR327R33++, box 1–85, no. 31

Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS Cgm 4967 (7).

Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, MS 981 Helmst.

Works Published before 1800

Avrevm vellvs oder Güldin Schatz und Kunstkammer [. . .] *sampt andern Philosophischen alter vnnd newer Scribenten sonderbaren Tractetlein*. 1599/1600. N.p.: n.p.

Grundtlicher Beweiß wie Theophrastus Paracelsus, Valentinus Weigel, Paulus Felgenhauer, Nicolaus Tetinge und andere ihres gleichen/ mit grosser Heucheley/ mit groben Lesterungen/ und mit falschen Weissagungen umbgehen. 1634. N.p.: n.p.

Draud, Georg. 1625. *Bibliotheca librorum Germanicorum classica* [. . .]. Second edition. Frankfurt/Mayn: Kopff.

[Eisenmenger, Samuel]. 1585. *Cyclopaedia Paracelsica Christiana* [. . .]. [Straßburg]: [Jobin].

Geßner, Conrad. 1740. *Die so nothig als nützlich Buchdruckerkunst und Schriftgießerey*. Leipzig: Geßner.

Grießmann, Valentin. 1623. [. . .] *Getrewer Eckhart/ Welcher in den ersten Neun gemeinen Fragen/ der Wiedertäufferischen/ Stenckfeldischen/ Weigelianischen/ und Calvino-Photinianischen/ Rosen Creutzerischen Ketzereyen/ im Landen herumbstreichende und streiffende wüste Heer zu fliehen/ und als seelenmörderische Räuberey zu meyden verwarnet*. Gera: Andreas Mamitzsch.

Große, Henning. 1597. *Magica, seu mirabilium historiarum de spectris et apparitionibus spiritvvm* [. . .]. 2 vols. Eisleben: Große.

———. 1598. *Magica, Dasz ist: Wunderbarliche Historien Von Gespensten vnd mancherley Erscheinungen der Geister* [. . .]. 3 vols. Eisleben: Große.

———. 1598. *Tragica, seu tristium historiarum de poenis criminalibvs et exitv horribili* [. . .]. Eisleben: Große.

Hartmann, Andreas. 1600. *Vom zustande im himmel und in der hellen* [. . .]. Magdeburg: In Verlegung des Autoris.

———. 1600. *Erster Theil, des curriculi Vitæ Lutheri. Das ist: Warhafftige und kurtze Historische Beschreibung, der Geburt und Ankunfft* [. . .] *des* [. . .] *Martini Lutheri / Jetzo gantz Neu Inn etlichen* [. . .] *Comödien repræsentiret.* Magdeburg: In Verlegung des Autoris.

———. 1601. *Erster Theil des curriculi vitae Lutheri. Das ist: Warhafftige und kurtze historische Beschreibung der Geburt und Ankunfft . . . Martini Lutheri.* [Leipzig and Eisleben].

———. 1624. *Lutherus Redivivus, Das ist: Eine warhaffte Beschreibung/ der Geburth/ Ankunfft/ Lehr/ Lebens/ Beruffs* [. . .] *des* [. . .] *Martin Lutheri* [. . .]. Halle: Peter Schmidt.

Rinckart, Martin. 1613. *Der Eißlebische Christliche Ritter: Eine newe und schöne/ Geistliche Comoedia* [. . .]. Eisleben: Rinckart.

Tancke, Joachim. 1610–1614. *Promptuarium alchemiae, Das ist: Vornehmer gelarten und Alchimisten Schrifften und Tractat/ von dem Stein der Weisen*. 2 vols. Leipzig: Große.

[Thölde, Johann?]. 1599. *Ein Kurtz Summarischer Tractat, Fratris Basilij Valentini Benedicter Ordens/ Von dem grossen Stein der Uralten* [. . .], Eisleben: Hörnig.

Works Published after 1800

Aberle, Karl. 1891. *Grabdenkmal, Schädel und Abbildungen des Theophrastus Paracelsus*. Salzburg: H. Dieter.

Benzenhöfer, Udo. 1987. Joachim Tancke (1557–1609). Leben und Werk eines Leipziger Paracelsisten. In *Paracelsus und Paracelsisten. Vorträge 1984/85*, (ed.) Sepp Domandl, 9–81. Vienna: Paracelsus-Gesellschaft, 1987.

———. 1997. *Paracelsus*. Reinbeck: Rowohlt, 1997.

Benzenhöfer, Udo, and Urs Leo Gantenbein. 2005. Paracelsus. In *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, (eds.) Wouter J. Hanegraaff et al., vol. 2, 922–31. Leiden: Brill.

Benzing, Joseph. 1977. Die deutschen Verleger des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Eine Neubearbeitung. *Archiv für Geschichte des Deutschen Buchwesens* 18: 1077–1322.

Bubenheimer, Ulrich. 1995. Orthodoxie—Heterodoxie—Kryptoheterodoxie in der nachreformatorischen Zeit am Beispiel des Buchmarkts in Wittenberg, Halle und Tübingen. In *700 Jahre Wittenberg: Stadt, Universität, Reformation*, (ed.) Stephan Oehmig, 257–274.Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger.

Eisenhardt, Ulrich. 1970. *Die kaiserliche Aufsicht über Buchdruck, Buchhandel und Presse im Heiligen Römischen Reich Deutscher Nation (1496–1806). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Bücher- und Pressezensur*. Karlsruhe: C. F. Müller.

Friedensburg, Walter (ed.). 1926. *Urkundbuch der Universität Wittenberg. Teil 1. 1502–1611*. Magdeburg: Selbstverlag der Historischen Kommission für die Provinz Sachsen und für Anhalt.

Fürstenau, Moritz. 1861. *Zur Geschichte der Musik und des Theaters am Hofe zu Dresden: Nach archivalischen Quellen.* 2 vols. Dresden: Verlagsbuchhandlung von Rudolf Kuntze.

Gantenbein, Urs Leo. 2008. *Paracelsus: Theologische Schriften. Vita Beata.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

———. 2012. Converging Legends: Faustus, Paracelsus, and Trithemius. In *The Faustian Century. New Studies on the Intersection of Literature, Theology, and Nature Theory*, (eds.) Andrew Weeks and James M. van der Laan, 93–123. Rochester, NY: Camden House.

German, Wilhelm. 1916. *Geschichte der Buchdruckerkunst in Schwäbisch Hall bis Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Schwäbisch Hall: Heitz.

Geyer, Hermann. 2001. *Verborgene Weisheit: Johann Arndts* "Vier Bücher vom wahren Christenthum" *als Programm einer spiritualistisch-hermetischen Theologie.* 3 vols. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Gilly, Carlos. 1994. Theophrastia Sancta. Der Paracelsismus als Religion im Streit mit den offiziellen Kirchen. In *Analecta Paracelsica*, (ed.) Joachim Telle, 425–488. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Grell, Ole Peter (ed.). 1998. *Paracelsus: The Man and His Reputation, His Ideas and their Transformation.* Leiden: Brill.

Gunnoe, Charles D. 2002. Paracelsus's Biography Among his Detractors. In *Paracelsian Moments: Science, Medicine and Astrology in Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Gerhild Scholz Williams and Charles D. Gunnoe, 3–18. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2002.

Hannesschläger, Ingonda. 1994. Echte und vermeintliche Porträts des Paracelsus. In *Paracelsus und Salzburg*, (eds.) Heinz Dopsch and Peter F. Kramml, 217–50. Salzburg: Gesellschaft für Salzburger Landeskunde.

Hasse, Hans-Peter. 1995. Bücherzensur an der Universität Wittenberg im 16. Jahrhundert. In *700 Jahre Wittenberg: Stadt—Universität—Reformation*, (ed.) Stephan Oehmig, 187–212. Weimar: Hermann Böhlaus Nachfolger.

Kirchhoff, Albert. 1890. Ein speculative Buchhändler alter Zeit: Johann Francke in Magdeburg. *Archiv für Geschichte des deutschen Buchhandels* 13: 128–45.

Kühlmann, Wilhelm, and Joachim Telle (eds.). 2013. *Corpus Paracelsisticum Band III. Der Frühparacelsismus.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

Lenz, Hans Gerhard. 1981. Johann Thölde, ein Paracelsist und Chymicus und seine Beziehungen zu Landgraf Moritz von Hessen-Kassel. PhD diss., Universität Marburg.

Mielke, Heinz-Peter. 1976. Schwenkfeldianer im Hofstaat Bischof Marquards von Speyer (1560–1581). *Archiv für Mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte* 28: 77–83.

Nutton, Vivian. 1998. Der Luther der Medizin: ein paracelsisches Paradoxon. In *Paracelsus. Das Werk, die Rezeption*, (ed.) Volker Zimmerman, 105–13. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Opel, Julius Otto. 1864. *Valentin Weigel. Ein Beitrag zur Literatur- und Culturgeschichte Deutschlands im 17. Jahrhundert*. Leipzig: T. O. Weigel.

Paracelsus. 2008. *Theologische Schriften. Vita Beata*. (Ed.) Urs Leo Gantenbein. Berlin: De Gruyter.

———. 1922–1929. *Sämtliche Werke. Erste Abteilung. Medizinische, naturwissenschaftliche und philosophische Schriften*. (Eds.) Karl Sudhoff and Wilhelm Matthießen. Munich and Berlin: Otto Barth.

———. 1955–1995. *Sämtliche Schriften. Zweite Abteilung. Theologische und religionsphilosophische Schriften*. (Ed.) Kurt Goldammer. 7 vols. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Penman, Leigh T. I. 2010. "Ein Liebhaber des Mysterii, und ein grosser Verwandter deselben." Toward the Life of Balthasar Walther: Kabbalist, Alchemist and Wandering Paracelsian Physician. *Sudhoffs Archiv* 94/1: 73–99.

———. 2015. *Unanticipated Millenniums: Chiliastic Thought in Post-Reformation Lutheranism, 1600–1630*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Priesner, Claus. 1986. Johann Thoelde und die Schriften des Basilius Valentinus. In *Die Alchemie in der europäischen Kultur- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, (ed.) Christoph Meckel, 107–18. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Reske, Christoph. 2007. *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet: Auf der Grundlage des gleichnamigen Werkes von Josef Benzing*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Rudolph, Hartmut. 1978. Theophrast von Hohenheim (Paracelsus). Arzt und Apostel der neuen Kreatur. In *Radikale Reformatoren*, (ed.) Heinz-Jürgen Goetz, 231–42. Munich: C. H. Beck.

———. 1981. Einige Gesichtspunkte zum Thema "Paracelsus und Luther". *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 72: 34–54.

Schmieder, Karl Christoph. 1832. *Geschichte der Alchemie*. Halle: Waisenhaus Verlag.

Schott, Heinz and Ilana Zinguer (eds.). 1998. *Paracelsus und seine internationale Rezeption in der frühen Neuzeit.* Leiden: Brill.

Scribner, Robert. 1994. *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation.* Second edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Strebel, Joseph. 1946. Ist Augustin Hirschvogel der Monogrammist der authentischen Bildnisse von Paracelsus? *Nova Acta Paracelsica* 3: 133–46.

Sudhoff, Karl. 1894. *Bibliographia Paracelsica. Besprechung der unter Hohenheims Namen 1527–1893 erschienenen Druckschriften*. Berlin: Georg Reimer.

———. 1899. *Versuch einer Kritik der Echtheit der Paracelsischen Schriften. II Theil. Paracelsische Handschriften*. Berlin: Reimer.

Telle, Joachim. 1987. Benedictus Figulus. Zu Leben und Werk eines deutschen Paracelsisten. *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 22: 303–29.

——— (ed.). 1991. *Parerga Paracelsica. Paracelsus in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart.* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

——— (ed.). 1994. *Analecta Paracelsica. Studien zum Nachleben Theophrast von Hohenheims im deutschen Kulturgebiet der frühen Neuzeit.* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

———. 2006. Der Splendor Solis in der frühneuzeitlichen Respublica Alchemica. *Daphnis* 35, 3/4: 421–448.

Webster, Charles. 2008. *Paracelsus: Medicine, Magic and Mission at the End of Time*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Weeks, Andrew. 1997. *Paracelsus: Speculative Theory and the Crisis of the Early Reformation.* Albany: SUNY.

Wollgast, Siegfried. 1994. Paracelsus und Paracelsisten in Sachsen. *Manuskripte—Thesen—Informationen* 5.1: 16–23.

Zabel, Amelie. 1911. Lutherdramen des beginnenden 17. Jahrhunderts. PhD diss., Ludwigs-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.

Zika, Charles. 2003. *Exorcising our Demons. Magic, Witchcraft, and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe*. Leiden: Brill.

PART 3

The (Un)natural World

∴

CHAPTER 9

"Making Feast of the Prisoner": Roger Barlow, Hans Staden and Ideas of New World Cannibalism

Heather Dalton

In 1541 Roger Barlow, an English merchant, presented Henry VIII with a manuscript he had created: a cosmography known as "A Brief Somme of Geographia."[1] It contains a description of the Tupí-Guaraní communities Barlow encountered during his exploration of the Rio de la Plata river system in South America from February 1527 to July 1528. The most detailed episode concerns the killing, butchering and eating of a prisoner by a group Barlow labels "Guaranys"—the word for warrior in the Tupí-Guaraní dialect.[2] This description bears a close resemblance to Hans Staden's account of such practices. Hans Staden was a gunner at the Portuguese fort on the island of Santo Amaro when he was captured in 1552 and held at Ubatuba—a Tupí-Guaraní speaking Tupinambá settlement on the coast between Santos and Rio de Janeiro. In the sixteenth century the Tupinambá occupied most of Brazil while the Guaraní resided along the Paraná, Uraguay and Paraguay rivers and their tributaries.[3] Staden learned the language of his captors and claimed to have witnessed many of their customs, including the execution and eating of prisoners of war. Although Barlow delivered his manuscript to the English king at least eight years before Staden encountered the Tupinambá, Staden's account—the *Warhaftige Historia—w*as published in Marburg in 1557 while Barlow's was not published until 1932.[4] However, as Barlow's description is

1 Roger Barlow, "A Brief Somme of Geographia," Royal 18 B xxviii, British Library, UK. The term 'cosmography' is employed here in its widest sense—the study of the visible universe: a description of the heavens and the earth, which includes both astronomy and geography.

2 Barbara Ganson, *The Guarani under Spanish Rule in the Rio de la Plata* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 18. This label, initially used by Europeans, appears to have been acceptable to the Guarani themselves.

3 Ganson, *The Guarani under Spanish Rule*, 17–18. The Guarani also occupied other areas of southern Brazil. Both groups were central Amazonian in origin although they have evolved independently over the past 1,500 to 2,000 years. Santo Amaro is also referred to as São Amaro.

4 Hans Staden, *Warhaftige Historia und Beschreibung eyner Landtschafft der wilden, nacketen grimmigen Menschfresser Leuthen in der Newenwelt America gelegen* (Marburg: Andreas

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_011

the first detailed report of such an event by a European, it seems curious that subsequent discussions concerning the authenticity of such descriptions of Tupí-Guaraní communities rarely acknowledge it. This is especially puzzling in the light of the fact that debates regarding New World cannibalism gained momentum after 1979 when William Arens published *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy.*[5]

In *The Man-Eating Myth*, Arens concluded that cannibalism cannot be proved to have occurred as a customary practice and that reports of it, from the fifteenth century until the twentieth, have generally been slanderous attempts to discredit enemies or justify conquests. Arens does not allude to Barlow's account of cannibalism, although his first chapter begins by highlighting the unreliability of Hans Staden's account of his nine-month captivity by the Tupinambá.[6] Although the initial controversy that flared up as a result of Arens' debunking of Staden's text may have lapsed, Staden remains a figure of interest to anthropologists and historians alike. His work, translated by Neil Whitehead as "The true history and description of a land belonging to the wild, naked, savage, man-munching people, situated in the New World", continues to be subject to scrutiny.[7] Gananath Obeyesekere, for example, considers Staden's text to be the paranoid fantasy of a sexually repressed European, encouraged in his tales by his shipboard companions.[8] Eve Duffy and Alida Metcalf pick up on this in their 2012 study of Staden, suggesting that he, like others, used storytelling to "share experiences and emotions" and smooth his reintegration into his community. They do not approach his account as being either true or the result of a disturbed mind, but as "one man's attempt to survive in the early

---

Kolbe, 1557); Roger Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, (ed.) and intro. by E. G. R. Taylor (London: Hakluyt Society, 1932). References to Barlow's text are to this edition, rather than the manuscript.

5 William E. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

6 Ibid., 22–35.

7 Neil L. Whitehead, "Hans Staden and the Cultural Politics of Cannibalism," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 80.4 (Special Issue: Colonial Brazil: Foundations, Crises and Legacies, 2000): 721–51, see 749. Other works key to the debate include: Donald W. Forsyth, "Three Cheers for Hans Staden: The Case for Brazilian Cannibalism," *Ethnohistory* 32.1 (1985): 17–36; Frank Lestringant, *Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne*, trans. Rosemary Morris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

8 Gananath Obeyesekere, *Cannibal Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2005), 237, 251–60.

modern world on both sides of the Atlantic."[9] Their study is timely for in 2008 a new English translation of Staden's account was published, titled *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*.[10] Edited and translated by Neil Whitehead and Michael Harbsmeier, it features the woodcuts from the first 1557 edition.[11] It is these woodcuts and the descriptions of cannibalism that have received the most attention over the past four and a half centuries. In the preface to the 2008 edition, the joint editors introduce Staden's account as "a fundamental text in the history of the discovery of Brazil, being one of the earliest accounts we have of the Tupi Indians from an eyewitness who was captive among them for nine months." However, the claims on the back cover are less cautious, referring to it as: "the earliest European account of the Tupi Indians, and a touchstone in the debates on cannibalism"; and "the earliest eyewitness narrative of the Tupi peoples written by a European."[12]

Roger Barlow's description is the earliest known detailed first-hand account of a Tupí-Guaraní cannibalistic ritual by a European and it has been in the public forum since 1932. Despite this, debates regarding the validity and cultural politics of reports of cannibalism by Europeans in the New World have overlooked this important work. Moreover, ethno-historians and anthropologists who have defended the integrity of Staden's descriptions, such as Neil Whitehead and Donald Forsyth, have not mustered Barlow to their cause.[13] In their article taking issue with "Whitehead's claims for the veracity of Staden's account", Michaela Schmölz-Häberlein and Mark Häberlein refer to Annerose Menninger's disclosure that a group of Jesuit missionaries, led by Manoel da

9 Eve M. Duffy and Alida C. Metcalf, *The Return of Hans Staden: A Go-Between in the Atlantic World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 1–11.

10 *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*, (ed.) and trans. Neil L. Whitehead and Michael Harbsmeier (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008).

11 On the woodcuts see Neil L. Whitehead, "Early Modern Eyes—The Ethnographic Lens in the New World," in *Early Modern Eyes*, (eds.) Walter S. Melion and Lee Palmer Wandel (Brill: Leiden, 2010), 81–104.

12 Cover text provided by publisher and testimonial by Irene Silverblatt. Staden's account is central to the *antropofagia* movement which heralds Brazil's history of 'cannibalizing' other cultures as its greatest strength. In the "Manifesto Antropófago," *Revista de antropofagia* 1 (São Paulo, May 1928), the Brazilian poet and polemicist Oswald de Andrade argues that Brazil's history of 'cannibalizing' other cultures is its greatest strength, while playing on the modernists' primitivist interest in cannibalism as an alleged tribal rite.

13 For example: Forsyth, "Three Cheers for Hans Staden."

Nóbrega, wrote an eyewitness account of the Tupí that was printed in 1551.[14] However, they do not mention Barlow's earlier account. Nor do they mention Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca's account, included in his experiences as Governor of the Rio de la Plata from 1541 to 1544, published in Valladolid in 1555.[15] Indeed, discussion regarding European reports of cannibalism continues, based on the assumption that all the purportedly detailed first hand accounts of this practice in Tupí-Guaraní communities are to be found in the writings of Hans Staden, closely followed by those of Jean de Léry and André Thevet.[16] The aim of this chapter is to redress this omission, demonstrating how debates concerning the authenticity of early European descriptions of Tupí-Guaraní communities could be enriched by considering Roger Barlow's account. The chapter is in three parts: firstly, it introduces Barlow and provides an overview of his exploration of the Rio de La Plata; secondly, it focuses on his descriptions of the Guaraní in the textual context of his presentation to Henry VIII; and finally, it discusses the veracity and significance of Barlow's unique window on a world that had only recently been encountered by Europeans.

Roger Barlow and the Voyage up the Rio de la Plata

Roger Barlow was an English merchant who belonged to a Seville-based international trading network that spanned the Atlantic, dealing in cloth, sugar, wine, soap and slaves. He was born near Colchester between 1480 and 1496, into a family with connections to the woollen cloth trade, and he died in Pembrokeshire in 1553. In the mid-1520s, Barlow joined a group of Genoese and English investors in planning and financing the voyage to the Moluccas of Sebastian Cabot, Seville's Pilot Major. Barlow was instrumental in supplying

14 Michaela Schmölz-Häberlein and Mark Häberlein, "Hans Staden, Neil L. Whitehead and the Cultural Politics of Scholarly Publishing," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 81.3–4 (2001): 745–51; Annerose Menninger, *Die Macht der Augenzeugen. Neue Welt und Kannibalen-Mythos, 1492–1600* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995), 518.

15 *La relación y comentarios del Governador Alvar Núñez Cabeça de Vaca, de lo acaescido en las dos jornadas que hizo a las Indias* (Valladolid: Francisco Fernández de Córdova, 1555). De Vaca's short description is linked to his command that the "native subjects of the king" should give up eating human flesh if they wanted to "come to the knowledge of God." An English translation of the episode is available in *The Conquest of the River Plate* (*1535–1555*), (ed.) Luis L. Dominguez (London: Hakluyt Society, 1891), 129–30.

16 André Thevet, *Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique, autrement nommee Amerique: et isles decourvertes de nostre temps* (Paris: Maurice de la Porte, 1557/8); Jean de Léry, *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Bresil* (Geneva: Antoine Chuppin, 1578).

the fleet and when Cabot's fleet of four ships left San Lucar at the mouth of Seville's river on 3 April 1526, he accompanied him on the flagship as the fleet's *contador* or accountant.[17]

From the start, Cabot's voyage was hampered by three agendas that did not mesh. The Genoese and English merchants who had initiated the voyage, aimed to find a shorter route to the Moluccas, with the leeway to explore unknown landmasses along the way. With the involvement of the Crown and investors, this original plan still held, but the emphasis moved to collecting valuables along the way rather than exploring 'Terra Firma.'[18] Finally, when Charles V issued Cabot with last minute instructions to look for and support any survivors of previous voyages, it became a rescue mission as well. Cabot had been directed to sail to the Moluccas via the Strait of Magellan, but instead he sailed down the coast of Brazil only as far as Cape Maria. This change of plan, and the fact that Cabot returned with a depleted fleet and little to show for it, were to lead to a series of court cases lasting several years.[19] As a result, many witness statements relating to the voyage survive. As these documents refer to incidents that occurred prior to embarkation, during the voyage, and post disembarkation, they provide a valuable record of the entire expedition.[20] It is these, supplemented by Roger Barlow's "A Brief Somme of Geographia" and a letter written from the Rio de la Plata by Cabot's page, Louis Ramírez, to

17 Heather Dalton, "Negotiating Fortune: English Merchants in Early Sixteenth Century Seville," in *Bridging Early Modern Atlantic Worlds: People, Products and Practices on the Move*, (ed.) Caroline Williams (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 57–73; Heather Dalton, " 'Into Speyne to selle for Slavys': Slave Trading in English and Genoese Merchant Networks Prior to 1530" in *Brokers Of Change: Atlantic Commerce and Cultures in Pre-Colonial Western Africa*, (ed.) Toby Green, British Academy Proceedings Series (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 91–123; Heather Dalton, *Merchants and Explorers: Roger Barlow, Sebastian Cabot and Networks of Atlantic Exchange and Discovery, 1500–1560* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2016.

18 While 'Terra Firma' could be considered to mean mainland America as a whole, another investor in the voyage, Robert Thorne, prepared a map in 1527 in which he labelled the landmass south of 'Darian', and east of Panama ('Hispana Nova') as 'Terra Firma'. Thorne's map has been lost. The earliest copy is in Richard Hakluyt, *Diverse Voyages Touching the Discovery of America and the Islands Adjacent* (London: Thomas Woodcocke, 1582).

19 Dalton, *Merchants and Explorers*, chapters 3–4. Cabot was found guilty of substantial fiscal losses, causing several deaths and disobeying a direct instruction from the Crown. In February 1532 he was sentenced to two years exile in Oran in Morocco. Despite this, Charles V pardoned Cabot and he was reinstated as pilot major that year.

20 Jose Toribio Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot al Servicio de Espana*, 2 vols. (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta y Encuadernacion Universitaria, 1908) contains the legal documents relating to the voyage, including witness statements held in the *Archivo de Indias*.

his father, that enable us to follow the route taken by Barlow.[21] The fleet made landfall on 'Terra Firma' at Pernambuco. Although the Portuguese had yet to establish a fortified settlement there, Barlow described it as the place

> where the king of portugale hath a house of factorie for his brasyl, wch brasill the indies do cutte downe and bring to the portugales that reside there for bedestones, glasse and other trifles, and so thei pile it up by the waters side as thei do in kent pile ther billet, and every ij or iij yere the king of portugale sendeth certin shippes and carveles for it.[22]

Members of the crew reported that two Portuguese factors at Pernambuco told Cabot of the gold and silver to be found in the region of the river then known as the Rio de Solis. They also informed him that two survivors of the expedition of Juan Diaz de Solis were living on an island in the bay of Santa Catarina. Solis had sailed down the coast of Brazil and led a party up the Rio de la Plata in 1516. He did not return and it was reported by survivors that he had been killed and eaten. Although contemporary chroniclers never specified which group slaughtered Solis, they speculated that it could have been the Charrúa. However, as it was Guaraní-speaking interpreters brought from Santa Catarina who provided this information, it may have been Guaranís who ambushed Solis and then deflected the blame.[23]

After leaving Pernambuco, Cabot's fleet had stopped for almost a month to recover from severe weather on an island near to the place where the

---

21 "Carta de Luis Ramírez á su padre" in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 442–57. Ramirez was Spanish, although he is often described as French. This is because his letter was first published as a French translation. See Henri Ternaux-Compans, *Nouvelles Annales de Voyages*, vol. 3 (Paris: A. Bertrand, 1843). English translations from the Spanish letter are included in John Horace Parry, *The Discovery of South America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 246–49 and inform descriptions of the voyage in Henry Harrisse, *John Cabot, The Discoverer of North America and Sebastian his Son. A Chapter of the Maritime History of England under the Tudors*, 1896 (reprinted New York: Argosy Antiquarian Ltd, 1968).

22 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 164.

23 Some sources suggest that Díaz de Solís could have been killed in a mutiny and that his crew forged the story involving cannibalization. See, for example: Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 122–26, 230–237; Harrisse, *John Cabot*, 204, 205, 242–44; Tarducci, *John and Sebastian Cabot*, 172–6 in Ruth Pike, *Enterprise and Adventure: The Genoese in Seville and the Opening of the New World* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966) 109, 198–9, n. 36, 37; Gustavo Verdesio, *Forgotten Conquests: Re-reading New World History from the Margins* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001), 25, 35.

Portuguese established the fortified settlement of São Vicente in 1532. Staden's ship would stop here twenty years later on its way to the Rio de la Plata, and it was in this vicinity that the German gunner was captured.[24] At the end of October 1526, Cabot's fleet came to grief on a sand bank off the island of Santa Catarina where the flagship sunk.[25] They remained on the island for three and a half months and here they encountered seventeen Europeans: two survivors of the Solis expedition and fifteen Spaniards who had been put ashore by one of the seven ships of the Garcia Jofre de Loaisa-led 1525 expedition which was bound for the Spanish garrison at Tidor in the Moluccas.[26]

Henrique Montez, one of the survivors of the Solis expedition, had lived among the indigenous people for over a decade. He told Cabot that tributaries of the Rio de Solis rose up in the Sierra, an area rich in ore and that Cabot would be able to fill his ships with gold and silver.[27] Cabot also learned that Loaisa's ships had scattered along the coast of South America and none were likely to have reached the Moluccas. This news, in addition to the fact that most of his men were sick, many had died and four had simply disappeared, led Cabot to make a momentous decision. He abandoned the plan to sail for the Moluccas. On 23 February 1527, the fleet entered the muddy estuary of the Rio de la Solis, which Cabot renamed the Rio de la Plata.[28] Barlow reported that the river was "daungerous for grete shippes for in it be many bankes and shouldes that hath not passing ij or iij fadome of water."[29] On 6 April 1527 the fleet arrived at a harbour where a stream joined the Rio de la Plata, naming it San Lázaro. They spent a month there and on 8 May, the party divided and Barlow left with the main group accompanying Cabot upriver. They stopped and constructed a fort where the Rio San Salvador flowed into the Rio de la Plata system on the

24 Harrisse, *John Cabot*, 208–15; Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 150; Staden, *Warhaftige Historia*, 42–49.

25 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 150, 155.

26 Harry Kelsey, "Finding the Way Home: Spanish Exploration of the Round-Trip Route across the Pacific Ocean," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 17.2 (1986): 149–51; Parry, *The Discovery of South America*, 243. The aim of this voyage was to aid the beleaguered remnants of Magellan's expedition, held in the Portuguese garrison at Ternate, and to reinforce the Spanish garrison at Tidor in the Moluccas in order to safeguard the spice route.

27 Witness statement of Henry Montez in Bois Penrose, *Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance, 1420–1620* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952), 121.

28 Ramírez in Harrisse, *John Cabot*, 208, 209; Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 133, 14, 229, 305; vol. 2, 323, 352, 521; Pike, *Enterprise and Adventure*, 109, 199, n. 38–42; Parry, *The Discovery of South America*, 245. Cabot was later to learn that just one of Loaisa's ships had reached the Moluccas; Harris, 211–12; Penrose, *Travel and Discovery e*, 121.

29 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 155–156.

eastern bank of the Uruguay. Cabot told Richard Eden later in London that the good soil and weather there had produced marvellous wheat.[30]

Sometime in late September or early October 1527 Cabot left the fort with a party of between sixty and a hundred men, including his page Ramirez and Barlow. According to Barlow, they sailed the Paraná "above 300 leges wt a galion, a bricandyn and a carvel." Barlow hailed the Paraná as "a marvelous goodlie rever" and a "grete river of length and bredthe."[31] Not only was there fresh water, there was a plentiful supply of fish and game and a good climate. The men took advantage of this region of plenty to recover from their arduous voyage. About sixty leagues upriver from San Salvador, they built another fort of clay and straw called Sancti Spiritus on a tributary of the Paraná called the Río Carcarañá, in what is now Argentina. The region between the forts of San Salvador and Sancti Spiritus had impressed Barlow. The indigenous people in this region were Tupí-Guaraní. At the time Barlow arrived, there were around seventy Tupí-Guaraní languages, grouped into nine branches, centered in southern Amazonia. Numerous Tupí speakers lived along the Brazilian coast and inland as far as the Paraná, while Guaraní was spoken in coastal regions south of Tupí territory, and inland as far as modern Paraguay and Bolivia.[32] Barlow recorded that the local people from the coast, upriver to the fort at San Salvador "liveth by fishing and hunting, and these do not ete one another", however, those who lived along the Paraná, called "guaranies", "contynuallie make warre upon ther bordres and one ete another."[33]

On 23 December 1527, Cabot and Barlow sailed from this fort with an even smaller party. They left the caravel behind because their guide, Francisco del Puerto, warned that big ships could not get up the Paraná due to the frequent shallows. Puerto was the sole survivor of the party Solis had taken upriver. He had come to meet Cabot on an island in the delta where the Solis and Paraná rivers met, explaining that, as a 14-year old cabin boy, he had been spared

30 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 154–56. Cabot may have been referring to the maize grown by local communities, referred to by Barlow as "certaine seeds that thei call abati wherof thei make bothe bred and drynke", or the company may have sown their own crops.

31 Ibid., 156, 160.

32 "South American Languages: Mapping a forest of cultures," *Athena Review: Quarterly Journal of Archeology, History and Exploration* 1.3 (1997), available from http://www.athenapub.com. For a study of Tupi-Guarani speaking communities see Alfred Métraux, "The Tupinamba," in *Handbook of South American Indians* vol. 3, (ed.) Julian Stewart (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1959), 95–133.

33 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 156–57.

slaughter by the locals because they had a policy of not killing old men, women or children. Puerto had lived with the local Tupí community, thought to be Guaranís, for over ten years and was to prove a useful translator and intermediary in communicating with local communities. He told Cabot that nobody from the Solis expedition had ventured further upriver but confirmed that there were riches to be had inland.[34]

As Barlow's party went further upriver from Sancti Spiritus, they encountered areas where food could only be found by "ruthless foraging."[35] Cabot lost men to disease, starvation, desertion and increasingly violent clashes with local communities. In May 1528, Cabot encountered Diego Garcia, a Spanish captain who had sailed up the Rio de la Plata in a fleet of three ships.[36] Aware that Garcia had the means to press on further upriver, Cabot sent Barlow, and his treasurer Hernando Calderon, back to Spain to inform Charles "of the journey undertaken and the great riches of the land."[37] On 8 July 1528, Barlow left San Salvador in the *Trinidad*, carrying the letter from Ramirez to his father and one from Cabot, requesting supplies and more men. Cabot also sent objects, including metals and animal skins, to present to Charles V.[38] When Barlow arrived in Seville in early November 1528, he and his pilot, Rodrigo Alvarez, communicated the very latest information from their voyage to Diogo Ribeiro, the cartographer acting in the role of pilot major while Cabot was away. As a result of talking to Barlow and Alverez, the map Ribeiro produced in 1529 was very different from the map he had produced two years earlier. The cartographer placed an inscription near the Rio de la Plata, stating that "Sebastian Gaboto is still there in a fort he has built." He also indicated that the area was

34 Ramírez in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 448–449, vol. 2, 165–66; Harrisse, *John Cabot*, 213–18. Puerto's case is discussed in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 159–70, 280–82; Vicente Guillermo Arnaud, *Los Interpretes en el Descubrimiento, Conquista y Colonización del Rio de la Plata* (Buenos Aires: Talleres Cráficos Didot, 1950) and Walter Rela, *España en el Río de la Plata: Descubrimiento y Poblamientos, 1516–1588* (Montevideo: Club Español. 2001).

35 Parry, *The Discovery of South America*, 242.

36 Report from Diego Garcia addressed to Charles V in Harrisse, *John Cabot*, 218; Ramirez in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 455–456.

37 Ramirez in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 455–56. Ramirez refers to Calderon as "tesorero de S.M. y teniente del señor Captáin General", Barlow as "contador de S.M." and their task "para informar á S.M. del viaje que habíamos hecho y de la gran riqueza de la tierra."

38 Deposition of Casimir Nuremberger. Seville 28 July 1530, AI, file 1–2 1/8, piece 2a, fol. 64 in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 2, 152–55; Ramirez in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 450.

suited to growing crops for producing both bread and wine, and that there was also hope of finding gold and silver. Although there are no images of cannibals, on this map, Ribeiro noted that "the people of Brazil ate the flesh of their enemies."[39] Although Barlow succeeded in mustering funds for Cabot, his captain arrived in Seville July 1530, before relief could be sent.[40]

Roger Barlow's Text

Barlow returned to England and married the daughter of a wealthy Bristol merchant before moving to Pembrokeshire and working with his clerical brothers to further the Crown's policy for Wales. He benefited from the patronage of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII's Chief Minister, Thomas Cromwell, and built up a large estate at Slebech. He retained his links with trading networks in London and Bristol and continued to promote the exploration of potential trade routes.[41] After the fall of Cromwell, Barlow presented Henry VIII with his cosmography, the core of which was his translation of the Castilian 1519 edition of *Suma de Geographia Que Trata de Todas las Partidas del Mundo* by Martin Fernandez de Enciso.[42] Barlow combined this with a navigation manual and a proposal he had developed with a colleague over a decade previously. His intention was to gain the king's support for exploratory voyages to establish a trade route to the East via the Northwest Passage.[43] Although the exact date

39 Maps referred to here include the 1527 "Mundus Novus" in the Weimar Grand Ducal Library and the 1529 "Propaganda" or "Second Borgian" in the Vatican Library in Rome. There is a version of the 1529 map in the Weimar, which has many more inscriptions than the "Propaganda," including those cited. Images of the Propaganda Map are available on *Cartographic Images*; http://cartographic-images.net/346_Ribero.html; accessed 19 September 2012. See Surekha Davies, "Depictions of Brazilians on French Maps, 1542–1555," *The Historical Journal* 55.2 (2012): 31748 and Surekha Davies, "The Navigational Iconography of Diogo Ribeiro's 1529 Planisphere," *Imago Mundi* 55 (2003), 103–12; L.A. Vigneras, "The Cartographer Diogo Ribeiro," *Imago Mundi* 16 (1961): 76–83.

40 Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 182. Barlow arrived at Seville's ocean port of San Lucar on 1 November. Although Charles V was sympathetic to Cabot's request for further funding, prevarication from the original investors, the signing the Treaty of Zaragosa on 22 April 1529, and the fact that Francisco Pizzaro completed his reconnaissance of the coast of Peru, meant that Cabot arrived back in Spain before relief could be sent.

41 Dalton, *Merchants and Explorers*.

42 Martin Fernandez de Enciso, *Suma de Geographia Que Trata de Todas las Partidas en Prouincias del Mundo* (Seville: Jacob Cromburger, 1519).

43 Barlow's presentation to the king was made up of three parts: a map that has been lost; "The Address to the King" proposing that the king support northern exploration, SP 1/239,

Barlow presented his "Brief Somme of Geographia" to the Crown cannot be established, his reference on folio fifty-one to the capture of Tunis by Charles V five to six years earlier, in the summer of 1535, suggests that he put the finishing touches to it in the winter of 1540/41.[44]

Barlow did not name Enciso, or anybody else, as a source, simply stating that when he had not experienced something himself, he relied on the descriptions of "credible persones as have labored that contreis and also have written of the same."[45] In his dedication to Henry, he reminded the king that, being of noble heart, he must surely desire to know more about "straunge" contries, especially those "farre aparted from us" with "comoditees, behaviour and customes wch are very straunge to owres."[46] In keeping with this, Barlow included reports based on his experiences at the Portuguese settlements at the fort of Santo Cruz do Cabo de Gué, now the port of Agadir in Morocco, and São Tomé in the Gulf of Guinea, which he had visited previously as a sugar trader. He was keen to alert Henry to those "countries latelie discovered by your majestie" and by "the kynges of portugall and spayne." However, although Barlow added his account of the Rio de la Plata to Enciso's descriptions of the route from Spain to northern Brazil and Cartagena, he did not make any explicit references to the voyage.[47] Despite this, there are instances in the work when Barlow's 'voice' emerges to relate a personal experience that clearly draws on the voyage, revealing his reactions to an unfamiliar environment.

Barlow's descriptions of the people who lived along the coast from "cape sent austyn"—that is just north of Rio Formoso—to "the ilond of sancta katerina" are likely to have been informed as much by the castaways' experiences as by his own observations. Barlow identified them as Tupís, explaining that the "topys" were naked and "paynte ther facys and bodies." The appearance of the men "when thei go to warre" made a strong impression on him for they had lip piercings of "cristall and tuskys of wylde bestes," bodies covered "wt popingaie

---

ff. 106, 107, 107 verso and 108 (previously catalogued as ff. 126, 127, 127 verso and 128), National Archives, UK; and "A Brief Somme of Geographia."

44 Taylor, Introduction, in Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, xlviii; Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 96.

45 Ibid., 2.

46 Ibid. (translation of Enciso).

47 Ibid., 1–2; Heather Dalton, "Fashioning New Worlds from Old Worlds: Roger Barlow's *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, c. 1541," in *Old Worlds, New Worlds: European Cultural Encounters 1100–1750*, (eds.) Lisa Bailey, Lindsay Diggelmann and Kim Phillips (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 77–100; and Heather Dalton, " 'Into Speyne to selle for Slavys,' " 91–123. English merchants had regularly visited Santa Cruz from around 1470, as it was key in the distribution of Moroccan-grown cane sugar.

fethers" and faces painted "a grym fashion." He noted that some of the warriors wore helmets made of dried animal heads to "put ther enemies in feare for thei go more like devilles than men." Barlow recorded only one conversation in the New World—with a group of Carajás near St Vicente which "doth not (ete) one an other as the tupys do, but when thei take ther enemie thei kyll him and so let him lie upon the grounde for to be devoured of wylde bestes."[48] Staden called them the "Karaya" and described them as enemies of the "tupys" who lived inland from them.[49] Barlow and his colleagues "thought it unmeete to se very old men have yong wenches and to se yong boyes to have old women" and so "askyd them wherfore thei dyd so." They replied that "yong women cowd no skyll of the worlde, and therefore thei be coupled wt old men for that thei maie instructe or teache them how thei maie order ther house" and that the older women similarly answered that "yong men can not skyll of the worlds how to lyve."[50] Barlow may have reported this conversation because he could see the sense in their answer, but it is more likely that he did so because he considered it so outlandish.

Barlow and Staden's descriptions of the communities along the coast are very similar. Both described how the Tupís did not wear clothes and allowed hair to grow "onlie upon ther heedys." However, there are subtle differences, for example: while Staden explained that few villages had more than seven huts and that "each hut has its own chief, who is the king", Barlow simply stated that "thei have divers kinges wch the people do obaie"; and while Staden recorded how most of the men in the community had one "woman" but that some had more and that kings had thirteen to fourteen, Barlow explained that men "take vii ot viij wyves and whersoever thei go the wyfes go with them and carie ther children and all that thei have" and that "when the man diethe his nect brother shal inherit all his wifes."[51] Barlow's account of the "grete generation of indies called guaranies" who lived "ffrom sent Salvador up the river of parana" is limited to a description of how they fattened and then ritually slaughtered their prisoners-of-war, before eating them.[52] Although he does not provide a distinct location, by following the route of Cabot's party it

48 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 150–51.

49 Staden, *Warhaftige Historia*, 109. The Carajás (also called Carijós) lived in the vicinity of modern São Paolo to the Lagoa dos Patos. Barlow called these people "caraias", "acusibucas" or "cariges." The "acusibucas" cannot be identified with any accuracy.

50 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 152.

51 Ibid.; Staden, *Warhaftige Historia*, 122.

52 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 157.

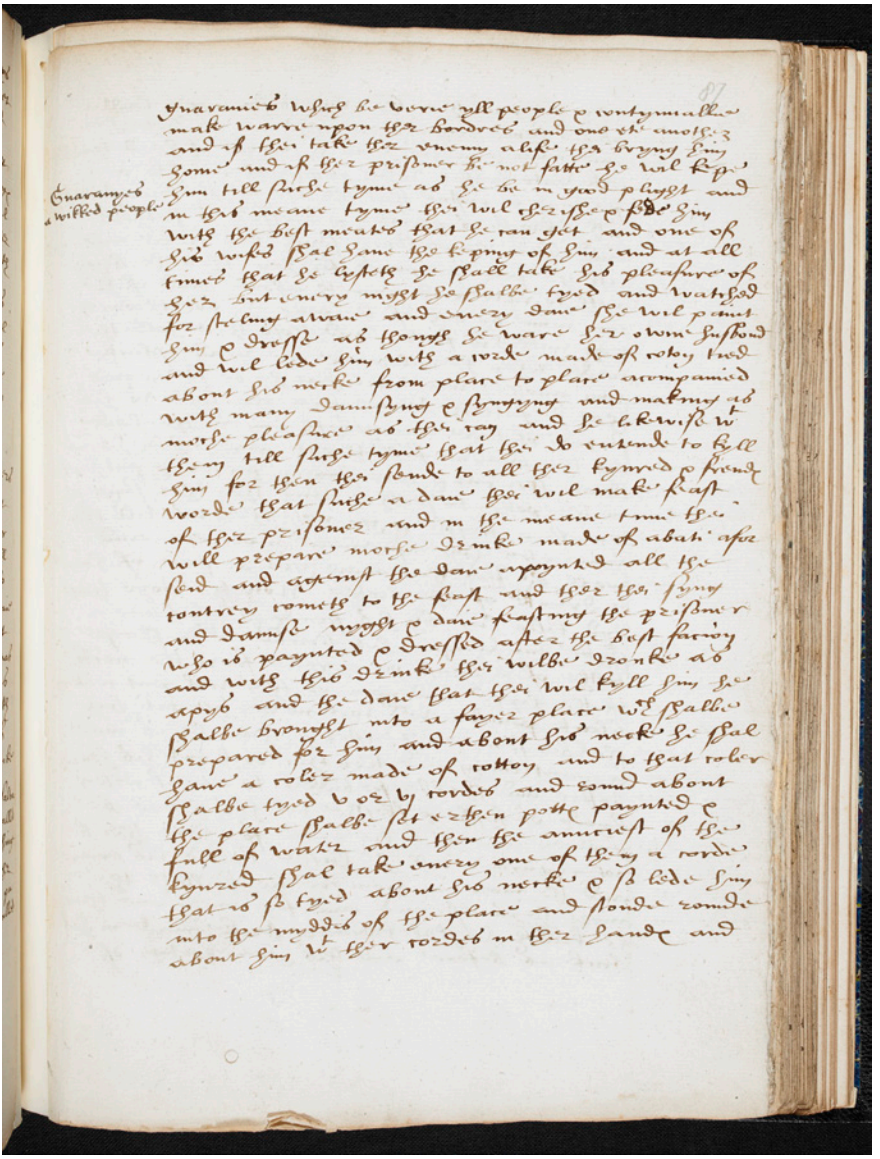

FIGURE 9.1 *Roger Barlow, "A Brief Somme of Geographia," folio 87 verso, The British Library, UK.* © BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD, 18 B XXVIII.

seems that Barlow is describing an area inland, due west from where Staden was captured and held.

Although cannibalism is an integral part of Staden's experiences in Book I, the detailed description of the Tupí cannibal ritual appears in chapter 29 of

Book II in which Staden provides an "account of the manners and customs of the Tuppin Inbas."[53] In this ethnographic section, Staden's description is unaccompanied by his reactions to it. Barlow's description is similarly disembodied, although he signalled his disgust clearly with the margin note "Guaranys wikked people", as shown in Fig. 9.1.[54]

Barlow was not simply fascinated by the idea that the Guaranis practiced cannibalism, but also that the women cosseted their captives before joining in the ceremonial slaughter and subsequent feast. Barlow described this behaviour in detail:

> . . . and if ther prisoner be not fatte he wil kepe him till suche tyme as he be in good plight, and in this meane tyme thei wyl cherishe and fede him with the best meates that he can get and one of his wifes shall have the keeping of him, and at all times that he lysteth he shall take his pleasure of her, but every night he shalbe tyed and watched for steling awaie. And every dai she wil paint him and dresse as though he ware her owne husbond and wil lede him with a corde made of coton tied about his necke from place to place, accompanied with many daunsyng and syngyng, and making as moche pleasure as thei can, and he likewise wt them, till suche tyme that thei do entende to kyll him.[55]

Barlow describes this without comment. He did not have to. The fact that the women domesticated the men and had a preeminent role in the ritual offered a shocking subversion of conventional gender roles. By choosing to focus on the sexual aspect of the women's behaviour, Barlow was adhering to a tradition of highlighting difference through behaviour Europeans regarded as deviant.[56] He continued, describing how on the day of the ceremony, "all ther kyndred" make preparations, singing, dancing and decorating the prisoner with paint and feathers. Pots are painted and filled with water, cords are plaited and a special drink is brewed for the prisoner:

---

53 Staden, *Warhaftige Historia*, 105.

54 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 157.

55 Ibid.

56 Whitehead and Harbsmeier, *Hans Staden's True History*, lxvi; Jennifer L. Morgan, "'Some could suckle over their shoulder': Male Travellers, Female bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500–1770," in *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54.1 (1997): 170; Dalton, "Fashioning New Worlds from Old Worlds," 96.

> and the daie that thei wil kyll him he shalbe brought into a fayer place wch shalbe prepared for him and about his necke he shal have a color made of cotton and to that color shalbe tied v or vj cordes and round about the place shalbe set erthen pottes paynted and full of water and then the aunciest of the kynred shal take every one of them a corde that is so tyed about his necke and so lede him into the myddis of the place and stonde rounde about him wt ther cordes in ther handes, and then ther cometh in the owners sone or a ladde of his kynne, paynted and dressed all in fethres, and bringeth in his hand a sworde of hard tymbre like unto brasyl which is proportioned like a palmar or custos thet thei use in grammar-scoles, which likewise is painted and dressed wt fethers.[57]

Such a club is pictured in Fig. 9.2, an image made for the first edition of Staden's work.

Barlow described how the prisoner seems calm until he "seeth him there, and all the pottes prepared for him, then he begynneth to rave and runneth about", constrained by the cords, "til he be so weried that he falleth downe, then the ladd wt his sworde of tree manglyth him in the hede til the brayne falleth out." Once they have "cut and tere him to pieces and put him in the pottes to seethe" and "have eten him up everie morcelle", the young men were initiated. Barlow noted that "the boye that dyde kille him" received a tattoo on his back as part of a coming-of-age ceremony, "Fo' here thei be not regarded til he hathe kylled his enemye, and the more in nombre he kylleth themore he is esteemed, and for every one that he kylleth he shal have a strike made on his backe as before" (Fig. 9.2).[58]

Like Staden, Barlow uses the word "feast" to describe the ceremony.[59] In both English and German, this word suggests a shared celebration. Both men's accounts are very similar in most respects, although Staden's account does focus more on the violence inherent in each step of the process. This occurs in both Book I and Book II. Staden explains "enemies eat each other" not because they are hungry "but from great hate and jealousy" and that, "if they capture someone who is badly wounded, they immediately kill him, roast him, and carry home the meat." While Barlow explains how the women "cherishe" the prisoner, Staden reports that when they are first brought into the village, "these are first beaten by the women and the children." Staden also adds the extra detail that should the woman become pregnant by her prisoner, "they raise the

57 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 158.

58 Ibid., 158–59.

59 Staden uses the word "fest".

FIGURE 9.2 *Ritual Killing of Captive, from Hans Staden*, Warhaftige Historia und Beschreibung eyner Landtschafft der Wilden, Nacketen Grimmigen Menschfresser Leuthen in der Newenwelt America gelegen (*Marburg: Andreas Kolbe, 1557*), *woodcut.* © BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD, G 7100.

child until it is grown. If it then enters their minds (to do so), they kill and eat the child." Moreover, while Barlow is circumspect when it comes to describing the butchering and eating of the corpse, Staden describes how the women prepare and flay the corpse before the men cut it up. Staden also goes into detail regarding which parts of the corpse are given to the children and how the women make a broth from the entrails.[60] Staden's extra details may have been a result of having lived with the Tupís for an extended period of time,

60 Staden, *Warhaftige Historia*, 128, 131, 137.

and observing the extended ritual at close hand, or because his community's ritual contained different or additional elements to that of the Guaraní Barlow described.

Significance of Roger Barlow's Account

Having lived and worked in the port of Seville, Barlow is likely to have seen maps decorated with scenes of cannibalism and would have heard of Vespucci's descriptions of cannibal feasts, even if he had not read them himself. He would have noted that naked women were active participants in cannibal feasts in the woodcuts made to illustrate the 1509 German edition of Vespucci's Letters describing the east coast of South America, a factor thought to be particularly shocking to Europeans.[61] However, although lust, monstrosity or cannibalism were conventional long-standing European labels for people remote and different from themselves there is a major difference between Barlow's description of cannibalism and other textual and visual depictions circulating in the first half of the sixteenth century.[62] While they depicted cannibalism as a habitual, yet haphazard activity, in keeping with mythical depictions such as Mandeville's where the people of Lamary "eat more gladly of a man's flesh than any other flesh", Barlow described an occasional, ordered ritual where the victim is fed and cared for before being dispatched.[63]

---

61 Illustrations of monstrous creatures and cannibalism featured in descriptions of the New World from Mandeville onwards. The earliest extant map on which an indigenous American appears is the "Kunstmann II Map" (1502–1506) in the Bavarian State Library in Munich. It shows a European being roasted on a spit. In Lorenz Fries's map, *Claudii Ptolemaei Alexandrini Mathematicor*[*um*] *Principis Opus Geographi*[*a*]*e Noviter Castigatu*[*m*] *& Emaculatu*[*m*], printed by Johann Grüninger in Strasbourg in 1522, cannibalism is depicted in relation to *Terra Nova*. Similar images, attributed to Hans Holbein, also feature in the Grynaeus maps of 1532 and 1537, which Barlow may have heard of prior to composing his *Summe*. It is now disputed as to whether Amerigo Vespucci actually wrote the *Mundus Novus* (August 1504), *Quatuor Navigationes* (September 1504) or the letters, such as the one to Piero Soderini. In one woodcut illustrating Vespucci's disputed letters, three naked women are reaching out to a European man and holding his attention while a fourth stands behind him with a cudgel, that looks like a human thigh, raised above her head. In another a woman holding her breast watches a man cut up a human arm and leg while a man in the foreground urinates.

62 Patricia Seed, "'Are These not Also Men?': The Indians' Humanity and Capacity for Spanish Civilisation," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25.3 (1993): 633.

63 Dalton, "Fashioning New Worlds from Old Worlds," 97–98.

Barlow's description of such a 'feast' is not simply the first description of such an event in English; it is the first detailed description by a European to have survived. While Neil Whitehead refers to earlier descriptions of the Tupís by Amerigo Vespucci and Pedro Vaz de Caminha, he notes that neither provided much detail in their written reports.[64] Antonio Pigafetta, a Lombard gentleman-volunteer, who sailed with Magellan, did describe the clothing, houses, hammocks, and boats of the Tupinamba he saw on the coast of Brazil, however, he mentioned only in passing that they practiced cannibalism. Pigafetta reported "they eat the flesh of their enemies, not because it is good, but because it is a certain established custom"; however, he did not expand on the nature of that "established custom."[65] In his long letter to his father from the Rio de la Plata, Louis Ramírez, Cabot's page, included a very brief description of the "Gaurenis" who, he said, inhabited a wide area and were hostile to the other tribes, although they were friendly to his party. He summed them up with the words: "they are a treacherous people, everything they do is by treachery." Ramirez did not describe any cannibalistic rituals, simply mentioning that they ate human flesh.[66] Oviedo consulted Alonso de Santa Cruz and other members of Cabot's expedition, but he did not record any details of such a ritual in his *La Historia General de las Indias*.[67] Indeed, if anybody else on Cabot's voyage recorded such an incident, their descriptions have not survived.

In the late 1920s when she began transcribing Barlow's manuscript, Eva Germaine Remington Taylor did not comment on the fact that Barlow's description pre-dated Staden's, concluding simply that "the wealth of detail with which these ceremonies are described makes it certain that Roger Barlow, like Hans Staden, was an eye-witness of a cannibal feast."[68] Barlow had spent time with Guaraní guides in Guaraní territory and certainly had the opportunity to witness a "cannibal feast." However, while Staden writes in the first person in Book I of *Warhaftige Historia*, thus placing himself at the scene of the "cannibal feast", Barlow's description is in the third person. This means that, while it can be argued that Barlow avoided the first person because he was writing a cosmography rather than a travel account, we cannot be sure that he

64 Whitehead and Harbsmeier, *Hans Staden's True History*, xxii.

65 Antonio Pigafetta, *Magellan's Voyage Around the World*, (ed.) and trans. J. A. Robertson (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1906) vol. 1; Parry, *The Discovery of South America*, 131.

66 Ramírez in Medina, *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot*, vol. 1, 449.

67 Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, *La Historia General de las Indias* (Seville: Cromberger, 1535); Taylor, Roger Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 156, n. 4.

68 Taylor, in Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 159, n. 1.

did witness such a "feast". The "wealth of detail" in Barlow's story could have been the result of reading a now lost text or listening to stories from an indigenous source or from a European, like Francisco del Puerto, who had lived with the Guaranís.

Although Roger Barlow was an Englishman, he played a part in Spain's colonizing venture and, because reports of cannibalism and idolatry were used to justify conquest and slavery, his description must be met with some degree of scepticism.[69] Indeed, as Stephen Greenblatt points out, there is only one thing one can be certain of regarding European descriptions of the New World during this period, and that is that they "tell us something about the European practice of representation."[70] Unlike Staden, Barlow did not embed his account of cannibalism in a text that be read as a straightforward captivity narrative or even as an allegory (Staden's continual refusal to accept his fate and his ultimate escape from the Tupinambá being seen as a tale of redemption).[71] Barlow included the description of Tupí-Guaraní practices to showcase his knowledge and establish his authenticity as a man of the world. Yet, his emphasis on sexual practices and cannibalism suggests that he set out to emphasise the otherness of the New World and, like Staden, to titillate his reader. Enciso, whose cosmography provided the basis for "A Brief Somme of Geographia", did not write about the everyday lives of the Africans he encountered because this involved cooking food, caring for children and other activities familiar to Europeans. He was not interested in engendering empathy, but in pointing out how different these people were. Enciso was engaged in a construction of 'otherness' that Barlow embraced and extended as he translated the Spaniard's text. When Barlow inserted parts of Ludovico di Varthema's 1510 description of Calicut on the Malabar Coast into Enciso's text, he also included a scene from Varthema's section on Tarnassari in modern Burma. Thus, Barlow intensified the impression of violence and sexual aberration in Calicut by allowing his readers to assume that the scene of *sutee* had been witnessed there rather than Tarnassari. The fact that Barlow was prepared to manipulate Varthema's text in order to optimize the otherness of the citizens of Calicut and increase the

69 Laurence R. Goldman, *The Anthropology of Cannibalism* (Westport: Praeger/ Greenwood, 1999), 37. Pope Innocent IV proclaimed a doctrine defining cannibalism as a sin that merited punishment by Christians through the use of arms and in 1503 Queen Isabella of Spain declared that Spaniards could legally enslave American Indians who were cannibals.

70 Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 7.

71 Neil Whitehead, "Carib Cannibalism: The Historical Evidence," *Journal de la Societe des Americanistes* 70 (1984): 69–88.

drama of his own work, alerts us to the fact that he would surely have been prepared to package his presentation of the New World similarly. Even if Barlow had seen the cannibal ritual first-hand, his description is likely to have been impacted by what Anthony Pagden calls the "principal of attachment." This would have meant that Barlow would have unconsciously connected what he saw or heard to a European ritual he was familiar with—such as a religious ceremony or public execution—and thus misinterpreted the scene. Luciana Villas Bôas explains that such reattachment is especially relevant to travel narratives written during the period of intense religious reform around the middle of the sixteenth century. H. E. Martel provides a further explanation, suggesting that when Europeans found themselves dependent on Amerindians they had subjugated, they "feared retaliation for their trespasses." Interpreted this way, Barlow's description could be read as an attempt to displace the guilt arising from his party's ferocity towards / reliance on the Guaraní by exaggerating the violence they had encountered (or imagined encountering).[72] Whether or not these theories apply to Barlow, what we can be sure of is that he is likely to have used inventive description to bridge the gaps between what he had seen or heard, and what he understood, and what he knew his readers expected.[73]

Although we may not be able to achieve any coherent understanding of sixteenth-century Tupí-Guaraní communities through the prism of texts such as Barlow's, we can speculate on the impact Europeans were having by considering Barlow's descriptions within the context of Cabot's voyage.[74] This was not a pristine encounter—from the point of view of either the indigenous population or the European interlopers. Whitehead and Harbsmeier have pointed out that that by the time Staden was captured, Tupí-Guaraní speaking communities were desperately trying to negotiate the ever-shifting parameters between the Portuguese, Spanish, German and French, as well as threats from other Amerindian groups and the general pressure of European domination.[75] Although there were far fewer Europeans on the continent when Cabot's party travelled up the Paraná, witness statements associated with the voyage

72 Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 17–24; Luciana Villas Bôas, "The Anatomy of Cannibalism: Religious Vocabulary and Ethnographic Writing in the Sixteenth Century," *Studies in Travel Writing* 12/1 (2008): 7–29; H. E. Martel, "Hans Staden's Captive Soul: Identity, Imperialism, and Rumours of Cannibalism in Sixteenth-Century Brazil," *Journal of World History* 17.1 (2006): 51–69.

73 Dalton, "Fashioning New Worlds from Old Worlds," 92–93.

74 See Verdesio, *Forgotten Conquests*, 1–13.

75 Whitehead and Harbsmeier, Introduction, in *Hans Staden's True History*, lxvi, lxviii; Ganson, *The Guarani under Spanish Rule*, 22–23.

indicate a complex scenario. Cabot's party encountered European castaways who had survived due to support by Tupí-Guaraní communities. The sophistication and reach of the communication networks covering the east coast of the continent is indicated by the fact that the Portuguese in Pernambuco knew there were Europeans living hundreds of miles south. The reports of Cabot's crew suggest that indigenous communities near the coast had already aligned themselves with one group of Europeans against another—sometimes in order to maximize their chances of beating an old enemy, other times as a survival mechanism.

The hunting trips of Barlow's half-starved companions, combined with the spread of European diseases, would have had an immediate detrimental impact on local communities—especially upriver where the forest gave way to scrub.[76] Indeed, Barlow reported that the communities of "carandis, tymbus and chanais" on the north bank of the Paraná were enemies of the Tupis. He explained that although they "do not ete one another as dothe the guaranies", they "cut of ther hedys" of the guaranties and mount them on poles along the riverside.[77] Escalations in hostility between local groups, generally brought about by food shortages, would have been exacerbated by the arrival of Cabot's party. Seen in this context, the intention behind the cannibal "feast" Barlow describes may have been a form of resistance intended to bind the group, intimidate head-stealing enemies, safeguard land claims or to impress the growing numbers of European interlopers—signalling resistance to threats of encroaching domination.[78]

The Guaranís' reputation as cannibals was extended and entrenched by the networks of exchange that led Barlow to encounter their ritual and then record the event himself. Barlow's report would have been communicated beyond the confines of the manuscript he presented to Henry VIII, to his trading circle in Spain and England. It may have been the first detailed report of such a Tupí-Guaraní ritual to reach Spain and certainly would have been the first to reach England. It would have been instrumental in establishing, maintaining and enriching the emerging trope of the New World cannibal and should be considered an important intervention into the debate surrounding early European

76 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 162; Dalton, *Merchants and Explorers*.

77 Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 159; Taylor, in Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, 159, n. 3. Note that I am not suggesting that cannibalism was carried out in order to supplement diet but as a symbolic act.

78 Whitehead and Harbsmeier, Introduction, in *Hans Staden's True History*, lxvi, lxviii; Ganson, *The Guarani under Spanish Rule*, 22–23. Ganson suggests that the Tupí-Guaraní believed that consuming the flesh of their captives "meant they imbued their power."

reports of cannibalism, as well as European encounters with Tupí-Guaraní communities in general.

References

Archival Sources

Barlow, Roger. "A Brief Somme of Geographia," Royal 18 B xxviii, British Library, London.

Works Printed before 1800

Enciso, Martin Fernandez de. 1519. *Suma de Geographia Que Trata de Todas las Partidas en Prouincias del Mundo*. Seville: Jacob Cromburger.

Fernández de Oviedo, Gonzalo. 1535. *La Historia General de las Indias*. Seville: Cromberger.

Hakluyt, Richard. 1582. *Diverse Voyages Touching the Discovery of America and the Islands Adjacent*. London: Thomas Woodcocke.

Léry, Jean de. 1578. *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Bresil.* Geneva: Antoine Chuppin.

Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Alvar. 1555. *La relación y comentarios del Governador Alvar Núñez Cabeça de Vaca, de lo acaescido en las dos jornadas que hizo a las Indias.* Valladolid: Francisco Fernández de Córdova.

Staden, Hans. 1557. *Warhaftige Historia und Beschreibung eyner Landtschafft der wilden, nacketen grimmigen Menschfresser Leuthen in der Newenwelt America gelegen*. Marburg: Andreas Kolbe.

Thevet, André. 1558. *Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique, autrement nommee Amerique: et isles decourvertes de nostre temps*. Paris: Maurice de la Porte.

Works Printed after 1800

Arens, William E. 1979. *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

Arnaud, Vicente Guillermo. 1950. *Los Interpretes en el Descubrimiento, Conquista y Colonización del Rio de la Plata*. Buenos Aires: Talleres Cráficos Didot.

Barlow, Roger. 1932. *A Brief Summe of Geographie.* (Ed.) and intro. E. G. R. Taylor. London: Hakluyt Society.

Bôas, Luciana Villas. 2008. The Anatomy of Cannibalism: Religious Vocabulary and Ethnographic Writing in the Sixteenth Century. *Studies in Travel Writing* 12.1: 7–29.

The Conquest of the River Plate (*1535–1555*). 1891. (Ed.) Luis L. Dominguez. London: Hakluyt Society.

Dalton, Heather. *Merchants and Explorers: Roger Barlow, Sebastian Cabot and Networks of Atlantic Exchange and Discovery, 1500–1560.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2016.

———. 2012. "Into Speyne to selle for Slavys": Slave Trading in English and Genoese Merchant Networks Prior to 1530. In *Brokers of Change: Atlantic Commerce And Cultures In Pre-Colonial Western Africa*, (ed.) Toby Green, 91–123. British Academy Proceedings Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2009. Fashioning New Worlds from Old Worlds: Roger Barlow's *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, c. 1541. In *Old Worlds, New Worlds: European Cultural Encounters 1100–1750*, (eds.) Lisa Bailey, Lindsay Diggelmann and Kim Phillips, 77–100. Turnhout: Brepols.

———. 2009. Negotiating Fortune: English Merchants in Early Sixteenth Century Seville. In *Bridging Early Modern Atlantic Worlds: People, Products and Practices on the Move*, (ed.) Caroline Williams, 57–73. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009.

Davies, Surekha. 2012. Depictions of Brazilians on French Maps, 1542–1555. *The Historical Journal* 55.2: 31748.

———. 2003. The Navigational Iconography of Diogo Ribeiro's 1529 Planisphere. *Imago Mundi* 55: 103–112. de Andrade, Oswald. 1928. Manifesto Antropófago. *Revista de antropofagia* 1 (May).

Duffy, Eve M. and Alida C. Metcalf. 2012. *The Return of Hans Staden: A Go-Between in the Atlantic World*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Forsyth, Donald W. 1985. Three Cheers for Hans Staden: The Case for Brazilian Cannibalism. *Ethnohistory* 32.1: 17–36.

Ganson, Barbara. 2003. *The Guarani under Spanish Rule in the Rio de la Plata*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Goldman, Laurence R. 1999. *The Anthropology of Cannibalism*. Westport: Praeger/ Greenwood.

Greenblatt, Stephen. 1991. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Harbsmeier, Michael. 2008. *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil.* (Ed.) and trans. Neil L. Whitehead. Durham & London: Duke University Press.

Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil. 2008. (Ed.) and trans. by Neil L. Whitehead and Michael Harbsmeier. Durham & London: Duke University Press.

Harrisse, Henry. 1968. *John Cabot, The Discoverer of North America and Sebastian his Son: A Chapter of the Maritime History of England under the Tudors*, 1896. Reprinted New York: Argosy Antiquarian Ltd.

Kelsey, Harry. 1986. Finding the Way Home: Spanish Exploration of the Round-Trip Route across the Pacific Ocean. *The Western Historical Quarterly* 17.2: 149–51.

Lestringant, Frank. 1997. *Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne*. Trans. Rosemary Morris. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Martel, Heather E. 2006. Hans Staden's Captive Soul: Identity, Imperialism, and Rumours of Cannibalism in Sixteenth-Century Brazil. *Journal of World History* 17.1: 51–69.

Medina, Jose Toribio. 1908. *El Veneciano Sebastián Cabotot al Servicio de Espana*. 2 vols. Santiago de Chile: Imprenta y Encuadernacion Universitaria.

Menninger, Annerose. 1995. *Die Macht der Augenzeugen. Neue Welt und Kannibalen-Mythos, 1492–1600*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

Metcalf, Alida C. and Eve M. Duffy. 2012. *The Return of Hans Staden: A Go-Between in the Atlantic World*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Métraux, Alfred. 1959. The Tupinamba. In *Handbook of South American Indians* vol. 3, (ed.) Julian Stewart. New York: Cooper Square Publishers.

Morgan, Jennifer L. 1997. "Some Could Suckle over Their Shoulder": Male Travellers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500–1770. *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54.1: 167–92.

Obeyesekere, Gananath. 2005. *Cannibal Talk: The Man-Eating Myth and Human Sacrifice in the South Seas*. Berkeley: The University of California Press.

Pagden, Anthony. 1993. *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Parry, John H. 1979. *The Discovery of South America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Penrose, Bois. 1952. *Travel and Discovery in the Renaissance, 1420–1620*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Pigafetta, Antonio. 1906. *Magellan's Voyage Around the World*. (Ed.) and trans. J. A. Robertson. Vol. 1. Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company.

Pike, Ruth. 1966. *Enterprise and Adventure: The Genoese in Seville and the Opening of the New World*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Rela, Walter. 2001. *España en el Río de la Plata: Descubrimiento y Poblamientos, 1516–1588*. Montevideo: Club Español.

Schmölz-Häberlein, Michaela, and Mark Häberlein. 2001. Hans Staden, Neil L. Whitehead, and the Cultural Politics of Scholarly Publishing. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 81.3–4: 745–51.

Seed, Patricia. 1993. "Are These not Also Men?": The Indians' Humanity and Capacity for Spanish Civilisation. *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25.3: 629–52.

South American Languages: Mapping a forest of cultures. 1997. *Athena Review: Quarterly Journal of Archeology, History and Exploration* 1.3. [http://www.athenapub.com].

Staden, Hans. 2008. *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil*. (Ed.) and trans. by Neil L. Whitehead and Michael Harbsmeier. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Ternaux-Compans, Henri. 1843. *Nouvelles Annales de Voyages*, vol. 3. Paris: A. Bertrand.

Verdesio, Gustavo. 2001. *Forgotten Conquests*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Vigneras, Louis A. 1961. The Cartographer Diogo Ribeiro. *Imago Mundi* 16: 76–83.

Whitehead, Neil L. 2008. *Hans Staden's True History: An Account of Cannibal Captivity in Brazil.* (Ed.) and trans. Michael Harbsmeier. Durham & London: Duke University Press.

———. 2010. Early Modern Eyes—The Ethnographic lens in the New World. In *Early Modern Eyes*, (ed.) Walter S. Melion and Lee Palmer Wandel, 81–104. Brill: Leiden.

———. 2000. Hans Staden and the Cultural Politics of Cannibalism. *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 80.4 (Special Issue: Colonial Brazil: Foundations, Crises and Legacies): 721–751.

———. 1984. Carib Cannibalism: The Historical Evidence. *Journal de la Societé des Americanistes* 70: 69–88.

CHAPTER 10

Signs that Speak: Reporting the 1556 Comet across French and German Borders

Jennifer Spinks

In early 1556, a comet appeared in the skies. It excited a raft of commentary by and for curious and fearful European audiences who reported its appearance across Europe, in Constantinople and in Asia, with Portuguese Dominican missionary Gaspar da Cruz including it in the final chapter of a book describing his travels in China.[1] He connected it, along with the Shaanxi earthquake of the same year, to the rise of what he characterised as "the accursed sin of unnatural vice."[2] His framing of the comet as an explicitly apocalyptic sign points to the providential way in which early modern Europeans generally understood such phenomena.[3] This Portuguese author provides one of the most geographically far-flung reports, and one not published until 1569. However, vernacular printed reports produced in the immediate aftermath of the comet's 1556 appearance were mostly authored by northern Europeans, and especially by authors writing for French and German audiences.[4]

* I am grateful to Dagmar Eichberger and our anonymous reviewers for helpful comments, and to Michael Pickering for assistance with images. The research was supported by an Australian Research Council Discovery Project grant and by a DAAD Re-invitation Fellowship held at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin.

1 Gaspar da Cruz, *Treatise in which the things of China are related at great length . . .*, translation in C. R. Boxer, *South China in the Sixteenth Century* (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2004 [reprint of 1953 edition]); for the comet see 227. He travelled in 1556.

2 Ibid., 221.

3 For a compelling analysis of this early modern world view in an English context, see Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

4 C. Doris Hellman, *The Comet of 1577: Its Place in the History of Astronomy* (New York: AMS Press, 1944), 106–11. All the authors named by Hellman are based in French-, German- or Dutch-speaking areas, with the exception of one Polish author writing in Latin. The comet was also briefly discussed in Italy during the immediate aftermath of its appearance in Girolamo Cardano, *De rerum varietate* (Basel: Heinrichvm Petri, 1557), book XIIII, chapter LXIX, 935.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_012

The comet appeared during the year in which Holy Roman Emperor Charles V abdicated, and only two years before his death in 1558. It is consequently sometimes referred to as the 'Charles' comet.[5] This connection was well established by the time of Pierre Bayle's famous 1688 *Meditation on a Comet*, for Bayle uses this specific connection to sceptically interrogate the association between comets and the deaths of kings.[6] But Europeans reporting on the 1556 comet soon after its appearance—even those closest to Charles V—do not seem to have made any direct connection to the Emperor himself.[7] In honour of Charles Zika, this essay was from the outset planned as a study of the 'Charles' comet. Yet—perhaps ironically—the sources eventually revealed a contemporary lack of interest in connections between the comet and Charles V. Instead, they most commonly focus upon the comet's religious significance for communities.

Comets and other heavenly phenomena such as new stars were visible from many different locations at once. This makes them unlike other singular prodigious signs such as monstrous births or earthquakes, and it seems to have fostered a plethora of reports about individual comets. The 1556 comet appeared at a significant time, for as Jean Céard has argued, the mid 1550s was a pivotal moment in the sixteenth-century fascination with prodigious events.[8] This essay explores how the comet 'spoke' to the people of early modern Europe when it appeared, and in particular how it travelled across German- and French-speaking regions in vernacular publications aimed at wide audiences. As religious and civil conflict increased in France in the latter half of the sixteenth century, reports of unsettling and dramatic events from nearby German lands in the uneasy wake of the 1555 Peace of Augsburg seem to have been of growing interest to French readers, as several of the publications examined below demonstrate. The essay explores the increasingly complex attempts—often fusing biblical and antique models—to pin down the comet's meaning against this unsettled religious background.

---

5 A. G. Pingré, *Cométographie ou traité historique et théorique des comètes*, 2 vols (Paris: L'imprimerie royale, 1783), vol. I, 506, lists six sources on this point, but only one that was published within a decade of the comet's appearance: Ludovico Guicciardini, *Comentarii di Ludovici Gvicciardini delle cose piv memorabili segvite in Europa* (Antwerp: Guglielmo Siluio, 1565), 151.

6 Pierre Bayle, *Various Thoughts on the Occasion of a Comet*, trans. and introduction by Robert C. Bartlett (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 119–20.

7 See the case of Paul Fabricius, below.

8 Jean Céard, *La Nature et les Prodiges. L'Insolite au XVI^e siècle, en France*, 2nd ed. (Geneva: Droz, 1996), 159.

The reporting and interpretation of comets underwent significant changes in the second half of the sixteenth century. Modern studies of sixteenth-century comets have generally paid most attention to what they can tell us about the development of astronomy, and the measurement of distance and movement in the heavens. In particular, the comet of 1577 is regarded as a watershed event for debates about the physical location of comets based on close observation.[9] Were comets—following Aristotelian theory—actually elemental exhalations, located in the sub-lunar zone and thus conceptually and physically separate from the unchanging heavens above? Or were they located further away from the earth's surface, and situated in the same zone as stars and planets? These questions were crucial for larger debates about the composition and nature of the sky. The heavens were no longer widely understood as unchanging and sublimely perfect, but rather characterised as a dynamic space capable of extraordinary changes that could be observed, measured, and predicted in a technical sense.[10]

Despite the intellectual excitement of these changing views and their far-reaching scientific impact, other discourses grounded in long historical models and religious frameworks were undoubtedly more meaningful to most Europeans. Comets were broadly understood as portents of disastrous and dramatic events such as wars, plagues, and the death of kings.[11] The cometary theories of antiquity offered systems for making these identifications, primarily based on position, trajectory, the presence of tails and haloes, and the colour of an individual comet, as well as the length of time it was visible. Red-hued comets visible in the region of Mars, for example, were often taken as signs of war.[12] This type of association was often partly but not entirely symbolic. The hot exhalations associated with comets in Aristotelian theory meant that they could be literally seen as harbingers of windy weather because they were formed of the same physical matter as these weather conditions. In addition, some specific historical events from antiquity retained a particularly powerful explanatory charge. The comet that—according to Jewish historian

9 See especially Tabitta van Nouhuys, *The Age of Two-Faced Janus: The Comets of 1577 and 1618 and the Decline of the Aristotelian World View in the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); and Hellman, *The Comet of 1577*.

10 Aristotelian theories about the unchanging heavens were also challenged before 1577 by the humanist reinvigoration of Stoic comet theory. See van Nouhuys, *The Age of Two-Faced Janus*, especially ch. 3.

11 See works cited in n. 9.

12 See, for example, Johann Hebenstreit, *Des Cometen so dieses 1556. Jars von dem 5. tag Marciij an bis auff den 20. Aprilis zu Wittemberg erschienen bedeutung* (Wittenberg: n.p., 1556), fol. C i recto and fol. D i recto.

Josephus—appeared in the skies over the Jerusalem for many months in 66 CE was interpreted as a portent of the siege and sacking of the city four years later. The accompanying signs of Jerusalem's downfall also included a battle in the sky accompanied by crashing sounds and battle cries, and the voice of the man named Jeshua wandering the city's streets lamenting "Woe to Jerusalem."[13]

Prodigious signs were also inherently visual and as such part of a world-view of apocalyptic, visionary phenomena.[14] Comets or stars like the notorious Wormwood of the Book of Revelation—"burning like a ball of fire"[15]—conceptually sat alongside phenomena like eclipses, multiple suns or moons, and bizarre visions of faces, swords, and even full-scale battle scenes in the heavens with clashing sound effects.[16] These prodigious events brought together sound and vision in compelling but often mysterious ways. In the clearest expression of disaster, we see text, image and sound come together in the vision of the bird of the Book of Revelation screeching "We We We" as it flies across the unfolding landscape of disaster that will typify the Last Days.[17]

The interpretation of comets fundamentally drew upon biblical reports of prodigies and disasters,[18] which in combination with antique models provided

13 For portents of the downfall of Jerusalem see Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. G. A. Williamson, rev. and with a new introduction by E. Mary Smallwood (London: Penguin Books, 1981), 360–62. See below for examples of this language in sixteenth-century publications.

14 Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, "The Four Horsemen: An introduction," in *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster*, (eds.) Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, exh. cat. (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2012), 1–13.

15 Revelation 8:10.

16 See Charles Zika, "Visual Signs of Imminent Disaster in the Sixteenth-Century Zurich Archive of Johann Jacob Wick," in *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia*, (eds.) Gerrit Schenk and Monica Juneja (Regensburg: Schnell and Steiner, 2014), 43–53; Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*; Larry Silver, "Nature and Nature's God: Landscape and Cosmos of Albrecht Altdorfer," *Art Bulletin* 81.2 (1999): 194–214; Ken Kurihara, *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014); Philip Soergel, *Miracles and the Protestant Imagination: The Evangelical Wonder Book in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Ottavia Niccoli, *Prophecy and People in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

17 Revelation 8:10–13. On the lament see Spinks and Zika, "The Four Horsemen," 3. For the lamentation "Woe" see also Ezechiel and Isaiah 5, as Rosemarie Zeller notes in her "Reading Images of Natural Disaster in Printed Media of Early Modern Europe," in *Disaster as Image*, (eds.) Schenk and Juneja, 55–70, see 63.

18 Notably Luke 21:11, Matthew 24, Jeremiah 10:2, and Revelation 8–9.

a complex and frightening set of references points for early modern people.[19] Despite its fascination for the societies in which it appeared, and its relevance for reading the signs of the disordered natural world, the 1556 comet has been neglected by modern scholars.[20] It last received significant attention in the mid nineteenth century, when calculations pointed to its potential reappearance, generating some debate about the likelihood of it hitting the earth.[21] Why, then, is this particular comet worth returning to? Appearing in the middle of the decade which has been called a "golden age of prodigies,"[22] the 1556 comet is uniquely well situated for a case-study exploration of the meaning of a prodigious sign in depth. Rather than demonstrating how comets changed the history of science, responses to the 1556 comet reveal in unusually rich detail how prodigies like comets could be tools for the articulation of religious beliefs and identities.

This essay tests the religious meaning of the so-called 'Charles' comet through an examination of its representations in different genres of print—broadsheets, pamphlets, and little-explored wonder books—and across different northern European environments. Studies of early modern print are often confined within geographical locations defined by language or religious affiliation. Yet prodigious events formed part of a print culture that circulated *across* linguistic and confessional borders. The 1556 comet appeared in publications that reveal how one society could adapt and represent the print culture of another during a period of religious conflict and disorder. These publications demonstrate not simply an undifferentiated set of recycled ideas, but also reveal patterns of religious anxiety through the ways that the 1556

19 On the social meaning of comets see Sara J. Schechner, *Comets, Popular Culture, and the Birth of Modern Cosmology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Franz Mauelshagen, "Illustrierte Kometenflugblätter in wahrnehmungsgeschichtlicher Perspektive," in *Das illustrierte Flugblatt in der Kultur der Frühen Neuzeit*, (eds.) Wolfgang Harms and Michael Schilling (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1998), 101–36; Kurihara, *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany*; and Zika, "Visual Signs of Imminent Disaster."

20 For the most substantial commentaries on the 1556 comet, see J. Russell Hind, *The Comet of 1556* (London: John W. Parker and Son, 1857); Hellman, *The Comet of 1577*, 106–11; Pingré, *Cométographie ou traité historique et théorique des comètes*, vol. I, 502–7, and vol. II, 136; Karl von Littrow, "The Observations of Fabricius and Heller of the comet of 1556," trans. A. S. Herschel, *Monthly Notices: Royal Astronomical Society, London* 77 (1917): 633–43; and van Nouhuys, *The Age of Two-Faced Janus*, 124, 148–49, 155, 181–82, and 177.

21 Hind, *The Comet of 1556*; earlier postulated in Pingré, *Cométographie ou traité historique et théorique des comètes*, vol. II, 136. See also von Littrow, "The Observations of Fabricius and Heller."

22 Céard, *La Nature et les Prodiges*, 159.

comet travelled as well as how it—sometimes quite literally—'spoke' to early modern communities.

Broadsheets, Apocalypse and the Importance of Location

Illustrated broadsheets aimed at wide audiences provide some of the most vivid examples of contemporary responses to the comet. Due to the speed at which single-sheet prints could be produced, they were possibly amongst the first publications to report the comet.[23] Four extant broadsheets were published in Nuremberg, Strasbourg and Vienna, and were originally held in the collection of prodigy reports compiled by pastor Johann Wick in Zurich. They offer insights into the wider cultural discourse that developed around the comet, and the extent to which it was seen as a localised or as a broader geographical phenomenon.[24] What borders did it cross, and what interpretative frameworks was it placed within?

Two broadsheets in Wick's collection were produced in Strasbourg. The first incorporates a woodcut illustration depicting an urban streetscape with people from various social orders observing and discussing the comet (Fig. 10.1). The relatively calm scene is undercut by the text. It warns that new comets portend bad things, as they had done in the past, and that action should be taken to avert God's wrath.[25] The image here is a composite, with the street scene portion recycled from a 1554 broadsheet and matched up with a newly-created representation of the sky.[26] A second Strasbourg broadsheet sets the

23 On news culture, see Andrew Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 130–50.

24 On Wick, see especially Charles Zika, "Visual Signs of Imminent Disaster"; Franz Mauelshagen, *Wunderkammer auf Papier. Die Wickiana zwischen Reformation und Volksglaube* (Zurich: n.p., 2008); and Wolfgang Harms and Michael Schilling, (eds.), *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Band VI. Teil I: Die Wickiana (1500–1569)* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2005).

25 *Verzeichnuss des Cometen so im Anfang des mertzens erschinen ist* MDLVJ ([Strasbourg?]: [Thiebold Berger?], [1556]). Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter*, 148–49 (PAS II 12/52).

26 See the Harms Zürich catalogue for the earlier, 1554 broadsheet, made from the same woodblock but with a new sky. Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter*, 122–23 (PAS II 12/46). The labels "Aufgang", "Niedergang", "Mittage" and "Mittnacht" were also removed for the 1556 version. The street scene was used again in 1563 (ibid., 252–53, PAS II 12/65)—although, intriguingly, the monk was carefully cut away—and again in 1566 (Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter*, 296–97, PAS II 6/10).

FIGURE 10.1 *Anonymous author and artist*, Verzeichnuss des Cometen so im Anfang des mertzens erschinen ist MDLVJ ([*Strasbourg?*]: [*Thiebold Berger?*], [*1556*]), *woodcut.* PHOTO: ZENTRALBIBLIOTHEK ZÜRICH PAS II 12/52.

comet within a longer historical context of comets as portents of disaster. Uniquely, the text associates the comet—interchangeably also referred to as a "star" (*stern*)—with the fiery destruction and damage of a number of unnamed towns in England (Fig. 10.2).[27] The comet is thus both a sign and a disaster sent by an angry God.[28] The depicted scene emphasises panic and destruction. Despite their different visual modes, both broadsheets explicitly incorporate Apocalyptic textual accounts that stress piety but also God's mercy. Each lists a range of important earlier comets, briefly describing their connections to death, disastrous wars and plagues, and the coming of the Turk.

A Nuremberg-produced broadsheet stretches the polemical religious dimensions and the geographical remit even further (Fig. 10.3).[29] The anonymous text describes the appearance of the comet over Constantinople for twelve days from the fifth of March. This was followed by an "enormous and terrifying earthquake" (*sehr grosser und erschrecklicher erdbidem*) in the town of Rossanna in Piedmont in northern Italy.[30] In May, and prompting the publication of the broadsheet, another earthquake caused great damage, this time in Constantinople. The broadsheet text is placed within an explicitly apocalyptic framework, situating the "Day of Judgement at the door" (*Ju*[*e*]*ngste tag vor der thur*). It presents both comet and earthquake as disastrous signs, albeit ones that ultimately augur well for the Christian faithful who may fear apocalyptic destruction but also eagerly anticipate the Day of Judgment, and who will see the 'heathen' struck down by God's wrath. The damage to Hagia Sophia is a sign, the text assures its readers, that the Turk will fare badly. However, this is not simply a case of European Christian in conflict with the Turk. The papacy—polemically identified as the Roman Antichrist—will also get its desserts. This explicitly Protestant Christian viewpoint elides Catholicism with Islam. The apocalyptic dimension fosters polemical discussion of external threats, as well as of the moral urgency of choosing a path *within* divided, post-Reformation Europe.

---

27 *Warhafftige Beschreibung/ was auff einen jeden sollichen Com*[*m*]*eten gescheyen sey* ([Strasbourg]: n.p., 1556). Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter*, 152–53 (PAS II 12/56).

28 On this broadsheet see Kurihara, *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany* [e-book], loc. 457 of 4780.

29 [Valentin Neuber?], *Ein erschro*[*e*]*cklich wunderzeichen/ von zweyen Erdbibemem/ welche geschehen seind zu Rossanna vnnd Constaninopel/ zum M.D.L.VI. Jar* (Nuremberg: Valentin Neuber, 1556). Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter*, 156–57 (PAS II 12/55).

30 In 1556 Calvin sent pastors to Piedmont to combat Waldensian heresy. See E. William Monter, *Judging the French Reformation: Heresy Trials by Sixteenth-century Parlements* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 148–50.

Warhafftige beschreibung/ was auff einen jeden sollichen Coměten geschehen sey/ die gesehen
sind von anfang der Welt her/ biß auff disen itzgeschehenen Coměten in dem 56. Jar/ auch was sich an etlichen orten dar
nach verloffen hat/ vnnd in welchem Jar ein jeder gesehen ist worden.

FIGURE 10.2 *Anonymous author and artist*, Warhafftige Beschreibung/ was auff einen jeden sollichen Com[m]eten gescheyen sey ([*Strasbourg*]: *n.p., 1556*), *woodcut.* PHOTO: ZENTRALBIBLIOTHEK ZÜRICH PAS II 12/56.

A Viennese broadsheet with text by court astronomer Paul Fabricius brings the comet closer to home. Fabricius plots the location of the comet at midnight and specifically notes that it appeared over Vienna (Fig. 10.4).[31] He

31 Paulus Fabricius, *Der Comet im Mertzen des Lvi. Jars. Zu*[*o*] *Wien in Osterreich erschinen* (Vienna: Hans Singriener, 15 March 1556). I use the Vienna copy (OENB F 100.015-B.Alt. Flu) of the Fabricius broadsheet as it has more text remaining on the sheet. For the Wick

Ein erschröcklich wunderzeichen/von zweyen Erdbidemen/
welche geschehen seind zu Rossanna vnnd Constantinopel/
Im M. D. LVI. Jar.

FIGURE 10.3 [*Valentin Neuber?*] *and anonymous artist*, Ein erschro[e]cklich wunderzeichen/ von zweyen Erdbibemem/ welche geschehen seind zu Rossanna vnnd Constaninopel/ zum M.D.L.VI. Jar (*Nuremberg: Valentin Neuber, 1556*), *woodcut.* PHOTO: ZENTRALBIBLIOTHEK ZÜRICH PAS II 12/55.

deals briefly with issues of observation and measurement, and refers the reader three times to his Latin *Judicium* on the same comet for further

copy in Zurich (missing the appended text) see Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter*, 150–51 (PAS II 2/16). On Fabricius, see *The Comet of 1577*, 106–9, and von Littrow, "The Observations of Fabricius and Heller."

Der Comet im Mertzen des Lvi. Jars.
Zu Wienn in Osterreich erschinen:
Mitternacht
Aufgang
Niderganng
Mittag
Tropicus Cancri
Aequinoctialis
Iupiter
Dem Edlen Ersamen Wolweisen Herrn Vito Hütter \ Raths
Verwanten zu Krembs / seinem günstigen Herrn vnd Patron / Wünscht heyl von Gott.
Paulus Fabricius Römischer Königlicher Mayestat Mathematicus.

FIGURE 10.4 *Paulus Fabricius and anonymous artist*, Der Comet im Mertzen des Lvi. Jars. Zu[o] Wien in Osterreich erschinen (*Vienna: Hans Singriener, 15 March 1556*), *woodcut.*

PHOTO: ÖNB VIENNA F 100.015-B.ALT.FLU.

detail.[32] Comets signify "evil things and nothing good" (*vbels vnd keiner gu*[*e*]*ts*), and in this case the warning is particularly sharp for German-speaking lands. Fabricius assures his readers that the signs are also negative for the Low Countries and indeed for Spanish or Italian lands.[33] But Vienna—positioned under the astrological sign of Libra (*Waage*) and thus "almost at the head" (*fast vber dem kopff*)—is at the epicentre of the meaning and affect of the comet. Throughout the text, Fabricius stresses that the comet is a sign of the coming Last Days, though he carefully notes that he cannot predict the day, hour or year of the Apocalypse, which is known only to God.

Pamphlets, Professional Contexts and Religious Frameworks

Broadsheets provide rich German-language material and evidence of apocalyptic interpretations sometimes framed in broader geographical terms. But pamphlets provide the best evidence for the reception of the comet across northern Europe, with examples from French-speaking areas and across German and French borders. A number of short pamphlets were produced in the immediate aftermath of the comet's appearance and emerged from the specific professional fields of medicine, prognostication and astronomy while still paying close attention to issues of religion. French astrologer Claude Groslier, for example, frames his discussion of the comet in specifically apocalyptic terms in a 16-page pamphlet of 1556.[34] Such works formed part of the nascent scientific observation of comets praised and documented by Doris Hellman.[35] However, they are are also richly revealing of broader religious, historical interpretive frameworks, and their longer length fostered more extended interpretations than were possible in broadsheets.

---

32 On the technical content of the Latin *Judicium* text (which I have been unable to locate) see von Littrow, "The Observations of Fabricius and Heller," 634–35. See discussion below and n. 47 for a possible French translation.

33 Fabricius does not discuss France, unless it is extremely loosely incorporated through his reference to "Niderlandt &c."

34 Claude Groslier, *Signification véridique de la comette* . . . (Montferrant: Bonaventure Belis and Jaspar de Rémortier, 1556). I have been unable to obtain access to this pamphlet and rely on the discussion in Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion* (*vers 1525–vers 1610*), 2 vols in 1 (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990), vol. 1, 118. For an additional French pamphlet prepared by a humanist, see the work by Gabriel Simeoni discussed in comparison with wonder books, below.

35 Hellman, *The Comet of 1577*, 106–11.

A very wide-ranging approach typifies the work of Nuremberger Joachim Heller, a professional prognosticator and author of many *Practica*.[36] He includes a preliminary discussion of general patterns in the weather and of politics, but gives primary space to the 1556 comet.[37] He plots its course descriptively and identifies key planetary conjunctions—given marvelously multi-dimensional visual form in the woodcut on the pamphlet's title page (Fig. 10.5). The latter half of the publication addresses the meaning of the event, which Heller identifies above all as a warning from God and sign of the Last Days.[38] But Heller also establishes his argument partly through reference to key ancient astronomers, including Ptolemy and Albumasar. He emphasises the negative connotations of all comets across all parts of the world and in all periods of history. Yet despite this, Heller concludes by emphasising the positive meaning of the Apocalypse as a precursor to the Day of Judgment, and assures his readers that that for Christians God uses comets as signs that will ultimately "comfort . . . [and] save" (*trosten . . . [und] retten*).[39]

Extant pamphlets also include several works by physicians who sought to establish their authority to interpret natural signs. The complex title page woodcut for Erfurt physician Johann Hebenstreit's pamphlet presents the comet and its trajectory in a negative, warning light.[40] The planetary influences of Mars, Mercury and especially Saturn are given vivid visual form, with the latter god clutching one of his own children in readiness to devour the infant (Fig. 10.6). A prominent reference to Philipp Melanchthon on the title page situates the publication within the learned Protestant context of Wittenberg-based interests in astrology and astronomy.[41] The text within likewise displays the author's intellectual credentials, and is punctuated with Greek and Latin phrases from Ptolemy to Plato to Pythagoras. While Hebenstreit does not establish a specifically apocalyptic reading of its appearance, the comet is a sign from God, and signals "war, bloodshed, hunger and plague" (*Krieg/ Blutvergiessen/ Hunger vnd*

36 On Heller see ibid., 107–8. This work, however, does not seem to have been translated.

37 Joachim Heller, *Practica/ auf das M.D.LVII. Jar . . .* (Nuremberg: Joachim Heller, 1556), fol. D 1 verso.

38 See especially the sixth chapter. Ibid., fols D3 verso–E3 recto.

39 Heller, *Practica*, fol. E3 verso.

40 Hebenstreit, *Des Cometen so dieses 1556. Jars*, fol. B ij verso. On Hebenstreit, see Hellman, *The Comet of 1577*, 109–10.

41 On this context see Claudia Brosseder, *Im Bann der Sterne. Caspar Peucer, Philipp Melanchthon und andere Wittenberger Astrologen* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004), and Sachiko Kusukawa, *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy: The case of Philip Melanchthon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

FIGURE 10.5 *Anonymous artist, title page, in Joachim Heller,* Practica/ auf das M.D.LVII. Jar . . . (*Nuremberg: Joachim Heller, 1556*), *woodcut.*
PHOTO: HERZOG AUGUST BIBLIOTHEK WOLFENBÜTTEL: 42.5 ASTRON. (20).

Des Cometen/ so dieses 1556. Jars von
dem 5. tag Marcij an/ bis auff den 20. Aprilis zu Wittemberg er-
schienen/ bedeutung. Darinne auch derer meinung/ so zween Come-
ten gesatzt/ gründlich refutirt wird/ durch
M. Johannem Hebenstreit juniorem Erphordensem.
POLVS ZODIACI
EQVINOC.
ECLIPTICA
PHILIPPVS MELANTHON.
Ipsa etiam quamuis Adamanti incisa feruntur
Cum petimus, cedunt fata scuera Deo.
Nec Deus est numen Parcarum carcere clausum,
Quale putabatur Stoicus esse Deus.
Ipse potest Solis cursus inhibere uolantes,
Ipse uelut scopulos flumina stare iubet.
Astron. 425d

FIGURE 10.6 *Anonymous artist, title page, in Johann Hebenstreit*, Des Cometen so dieses 1556. Jars von dem 5. tag Marciij an bis auff den 20. Aprilis zu Wittemberg erschienen bedeutung (*Wittenberg: n.p., 1556*), *woodcut.*
PHOTO: UNIVERSITÄTSBIBLIOTHEK LEIPZIG, ASTRON. 425-D, TITELBLATT.

Pestilentz).[42] He incorporates a lengthy list of the many different geographical locations within Europe that will be most affected.[43]

Low Countries physician Peter Haschaert (Pierre Hascard) stays more narrowly within his area of professional specialisation in a pamphlet with a preface dated 15 May 1556. He notes the historic connection of comets with plagues and writes extensively about plague in this work on what he calls the "horrible comet."[44] Indeed, he connects the reported brown colour of the comet to various Saturnine diseases, from fevers to hamaerrhoids to paralysis.[45] This is set in a pious though not apocalyptic framework, and Haschaert stresses God's mercy: "Convert with all your heart to our Lord God, for he is benevolent and merciful."[46]

Viennese court astronomer Paul Fabricius' broadsheet on the comet had focused upon Vienna. If we turn to a seven-page pamphlet by Fabricius published in French in 1557, it is also possible to trace how material travelled across French and German language borders and to what end.[47] The woodcut illustration is extremely similar though not identical to the illustration accompanying his earlier broadsheet (Fig. 10.4), and the text describes his observation of the trajectory of the comet in some detail. In a neat combination of careful observation and self-promotion, Fabricius connects one measurement taken on "the ninth day at nine o'clock" (*le ix. iour à neuf heures*) to the hour of his daily mathematics lesson for Charles V.[48] Further praise of Charles then follows. Perhaps this text may loosely be considered one foundation for the longer-term connection of the comet to Charles V, outlined above. But Fabricius does not attempt to establish a meaningful connection to Charles' fortunes, and there is nothing portentous about his reference to the Emperor.

---

42 Ibid., fol. D iiij verso.

43 Johann Hebenstreit, *Des Cometen so dieses 1556. Jars*, fols D iiij verso–recto, and fols F ij verso–E [F] ij recto.

44 Pierre Hascard [Peter Haschaert], *De l'horrible Comet, Qui sest apparu en ces Regions* (Louvain: Ian Vvaen, 1556), sig. Aiij recto. On Haschaert see van Nouhuys, *The Age of Two-Faced Janus*, 148–49.

45 Hascard, *De l'horrible Comet*, sig. Av recto.

46 "Conuertissons nous do[n]c de tout nostre coeur à nostre seigneur Dieu car il est bening et misericors." Ibid., sig. Avj verso. For a similar phrase see the discussion of Gabriel Simeoni, below.

47 Pol Fabrice [Paulus Fabricius], *Le cours et signification du comete qui a este veu lannee precedente en Mars par Masitre Pol Fabrice, mathematicien du Roy des Rommain* (Antwerp: Jean Withaye, 1557).

48 Fabrice, *Le cours et signification du comete*, fol. Aiiij verso.

Instead, Fabricius presents negative meanings of the comet as broad in scope, and relevant to communities across Europe. The final five pages of the pamphlet are given over to the meaning of the comet and its conjunction with the ill-omened planets Saturn, Mercury and Mars. As in the broadsheet, the comet holds particular meaning for "all of Germany" (*tout la Germanie*) and for Austria because the tail of the comet points north. It signifies "secrets and consultations, violent treachery, mutinies, murders and seditious behaviour" as well as plague and the likely coming of the Turk.[49] The closing pages assure the reader "our Lord Jesus Christ makes us aware of such prodigies as a sure sign of His coming."[50] Framed as a plea to God to be merciful, Fabricius piously reminds his readers in his closing words that although comets might nearly always be negative in meaning, the 'comet' that had appeared at the birth of Christ had a positive meaning.[51]

Fabricius' French translation is particularly useful for thinking about the transmission of material across borders. The language of its preface is specifically directed towards the extirpation of heresy and lack of faith, framed at one point in global terms, comparatively addressing Persia, Ethiopa, China, and other parts of Asia.[52] This prefatory text was added by the presumed translator "P. de Lens", who further emphasises the religious reading of the comet, stressing its great significance as a sign of coming apocalypse. Comets, the text asserts, presage the coming of the Antichrist. This claim is reinforced by the description of a supernatural voice heard in the streets at the time of the comet and "crying in a loud voice: raise yourself, dead [bodies]; raise yourself, and come to judgement."[53] The apocalyptic meaning of the comet is pinned down here in a new and vividly multi-sensory way; an approach that recurs in the final set of sources for this essay.

"VEH, VEH, ECCLESIÆ": Wonder Books, Meaning and Voice

The broadsheet and pamphlets discussed above responded to and focused specifically upon the 1556 comet. But the comet was also reported in lengthier

49 "secretz + consultations/ violentes traisons/ mutineries/ meurtres + sedicions." Ibid., fol. Bi recto.

50 "nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ nous faict prendre egard a telz prodiges/ com[m]e certaine marque de son aduenement." Ibid., fol. Bij recto.

51 Ibid., fol. Bij verso (i.e. the star of Bethlehem, Matthew 2:1–12).

52 Ibid., fols Aij recto and verso.

53 "criast a haute uoix: Leuez uous les morts/ leuez vous/ venez au iugement." Ibid., fol. Aiij recto.

works that saw it as one smaller part of a larger pattern. Writing in Zurich in Latin in April 1556, theologian Ludwig Lavater briefly set the 1556 comet against the background of a detailed chronological catalogue of comets.[54] For a vernacular readership with different concerns, Lutheran preacher Bartholomaeus Gernhard wrote about the comet in his 1556 printed sermon on the signs of the Apocalypse.[55] Gernhard wrote that comets were fearful signs and warnings from God. His account is most notable, however, for his personal observation of the comet in the vicinity of Erfurt only three nights before he wrote, when—most startlingly—he saw it accompanied by eight other comets.[56] A pamphlet by the otherwise unknown Johann Baum refers in generalised terms to the terrors of different historical comets, and warns of the Turkish threat. This moralising work notes that the 1556 comet could be seen across all of the German lands, and especially by all "unrepentant" (*vnbusfertige*) people.[57]

Most significantly, comets were frequently reported as part of larger patterns in the printed genre known as wonder books. These compendia brought together stories of different types of wondrous and disastrous events, from monstrous births to earthquakes to floods to the activities of the Devil, and they particularly flourished from the mid 1550s.[58] They offer a rich set of sources that remain entirely unexploited for understanding the significance, meaning and reception of the 1556 comet. Surprisingly, the comet's chronological

54 Ludwig Lavater, *Cometarvm omnivm fere catalogvs, qvi ab Avgvsto, qvo imperante Christus natus est, usque ad hunc 1556. annum apparuverunt, ex uarijs historicis collectus* (Zurich: Andrea and Jacob Gesner, 1556), see especially sig. E 4 recto–E 5 recto.

55 Bartholomaeus Gernhard, *Vom Jüngsten Tag. Vier nützliche Predigten, inn Zwölff Heuptartickel* (Erfurt: S. Paul, 1556).

56 Ibid., fol. B iii recto–B iiij recto (see B iii verso for quotation). On this passage, see Kurihara, *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany* [e-book], loc. 499 of 4780; and on this publication see also loc. 1069 of 4780.

57 Johann Baum, *Vorzeichnu*[*e*]*s des himlischen vnd zornige Zeichens / des erschrecklichen Cometen / so jtzund im anfang des Mertzens / Anno etc. 56 allenthalben am Himmel erschienen ist* (n.p: n.p. [1556]).

58 On French and German wonder books see Céard, *La Nature et les Prodiges*; Rudolf Schenda, *Die französische Prodigienliteratur in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1961); Stephen Bamforth, Introduction, to Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses* (*édition de 1561*). *Edition critique*, intr. Stephen Bamforth; annoted Jean Céard (Geneva: Droz, 2010); Rudolf Schenda, "Die deutschen Prodigiensammlungen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts," *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 4 (1963): 637–710; Jennifer Spinks, "Print and polemic in sixteenth-century France: the *Histoires prodigieuses*, Confessional Identity, and the Wars of Religion," *Renaissance Studies* 27.1 (2013): 73–96; Jennifer Spinks, *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009), 81–104; Soergel, *Miracles and the Protestant Imagination*.

mid-1550s connection to the rise of wonder books as a genre has not previously been noted or explored.

The comet's significance is most visible in Lutheran Job Fincel's wonder book cycle. The first edition of his *Wunderzeichen* was published in 1556—that is, the same year that the comet appeared—but Fincel's original text dates from 1555 and thus precedes the comet.[59] His approach to prodigious signs in the introductory material to this edition establishes such signs as a "voice" (*stim*) communicating God's message to humanity. Drawing upon Josephus, he specifically describes the lament "we we" over Jerusalem before its destruction in 70 CE.[60] More broadly and metaphorically, Fincel presents disordered natural signs as God's word made "loud and clear" (*lauter vnd rein*).[61] This framework was soon applied to the 1556 comet, for in 1557 Fincel's book was reissued with illustrations and a "newly revised and improved" (*Auffs new vbersehen vnd gebessert*) text that included an entirely new passage on the 1556 comet.[62] This section concludes with a dire warning to those who have not yet heard God's voice.[63] Fincel asserts that the comet should not be feared by the faithful but rather seen as a sign of the End Times, and the book finishes with a new and ardent reflection on the Apocalypse.[64] As for some of the broadsheets and pamphlets—albeit with less geographical specificity—the religious meaning is paramount, and combined here with a message that is metaphorically 'spoken.'

The two editions of Fincel's *Wunderzeichen* sit alongside several other significant wonder books. In 1557 the Lutheran author Caspar Goltwurm included the comet in his thematically-structured *Wunderwerck and Wunderzeichen Buch*.[65] Goltwurm connects the comet to the death of two electors of the Holy Roman Empire, one Catholic and one with Protestant sympathies: the Archbishop-Elector of Trier, John of Isenburg-Grenzau, and Friedrich II

59 Job Fincel, *Warhafftige beschreibung und gründlich verzeichnus schrecklicher Wunderzeichen und Geschichten* (Jena: Christian Ro[e]dinger, 1556), fol. A iiij recto.

60 Ibid., fols A vij verso–vij verso.

61 Ibid. Variations of the phrase appear throughout the book's forward, fols A iiij verso–D I recto. See also the repeated reference to God's "voice" (*stim*) in the use of Psalm 29 on fols D v recto–D vi recto.

62 Job Fincel, *Wunderzeichen mit figuren* (Leipzig: Jacob Bärwald, 1557), title page.

63 Ibid., fol. c vi recto. See fols. c iij verso–c vi recto for the 1556 comet (alphabetic signatures begin again in this publication).

64 Ibid., fols d iiij recto–d vij recto for the apocalyptic new conclusion.

65 Caspar Goltwurm, *Wunderwerck and Wunderzeichen Buch* (Frankfurt am Main: Zephelius, 1557).

the Palatine Elector.[66] By twinning these two figures, Goltwurm presumably intends to make a larger allusion to division, conflict and religious settlement, underpinned by the longer-standing tradition of associating comets with the death of princes and other leaders.

Basel humanist Konrad Lycosthenes' book of prodigies and signs, the *Prodigiorum ac ostentorum chronicon*, appeared in almost simultaneous Latin and German versions (as the *Wunderzeichen*) in 1557.[67] The reporting of the 1556 comet in these two editions contains intriguing differences. The Latin edition explicitly refers to Fabricius of Austria as a source, and the illustration essentially replicates the woodcut for his broadsheet and pamphlet (Fig. 10.4).[68] While the German edition uses the same image, it drops the scholarly reference to Fabricius. Translator Johannes Heroldt specifically names himself (*Jch Herold*) in this section as responsible for additional material.[69] In an echo of Caspar Goltwurm's analysis, he connects the comet's appearance to the death of the Palatine Elector Friedrich II.[70] There is also a rich set of contextual material for this event in the book. Lycosthenes' text describes many events from 1556, including another event from March of that year. This passage recounts the appearance of fiery signs in the sky over "Custerino" (Küstrin in Brandenburg).[71] Accompanying this sign was "a voice that no-one could identify, crying out woe, woe, woe to the church."[72] Job Fincel had located the same event in 1555, noting the accompanying "heart-rending cries" (*jemerlichen geschrey*) in his wonder book.[73] While the German translation does not cite its sources as frequently as the Latin edition, Lycosthenes' original Latin edition makes it clear that the phrase is taken directly from Fincel: "WOE, WOE, TO THE CHURCH. Job Fincel in the miracles of his times."[74] This directs the reader

66 Ibid., fol. Rm ii verso.

67 Konrad Lycosthenes, *Prodigiorum ac ostentorum chronicon* (Basel: Henricum Petri, 1557); and Konrad Lycosthenes, *Wunderwerck Oder Gottes vnergrundtliches vorbildren . . . mit grossem fleiß / durch Johann Herold / vffs treüwlichst inn vier Buecher gezogen vnnd verteütscht* (Basel: Henrichum Petri, 1557).

68 Lycosthenes, *Prodigiorum ac Ostentorum*, 653–56.

69 Lycosthenes, *Wunderwerck*, dlij.

70 Ibid., dli–dlij.

71 Now Kostryn nad Odrą in Poland.

72 "ein stim / do niemands wußtt wo ha[e]r sie kam/ die schrey. Weh/ whe/ whe der Kirchen." Ibid., dliiij.

73 Fincel, *Warhafftige beschreibung*, sig. d v recto.

74 "VEH, VEH, ECCLESIÆ. Iobus Fincelius de miraculoris sui temporis." Lycosthenes, *Prodigiorum ac Ostentorum*, 1557, 658.

not to Fincel's discussion of this specific event, but rather to his broader introductory conceptualisation of speaking signs and messages from God.

German-language wonder books by Fincel, Goltwurm and Lycosthenes reporting the 1556 comet—like the broadsheets and pamphlets—are layered with textual cross-references. They cumulatively build up a series of examples of visual signs overlaid with legible and sometimes literally audible messages. The 1556 comet thus forms part of a larger apocalyptic framework with pan-European dimensions, albeit one that is often geographically narrow with respect to this individual prodigy.

A French wonder book written by Jean de Marconville in the early 1560s takes a rather different approach, reflecting new and specifically French anxieties about religious conflict in Germany.[75] Marconville's text, discussed further below, offers an interpretation of a daytime 'star' that appeared at the same time as the 1556 comet and is presented as interchangeable with it. But in order to unpack this new presentation of the comet in a French wonder book, and the religious meaning attributed to it, we first need to examine Marconville's own source: a publication on the 1556 'star' prepared by Gabriel Simeoni in Lyon.[76] These two French publications conclude the essay by mapping out how the meaning of the 1556 comet was constructed from an increasingly complex nexus of ideas about place, voice and religious identity.

"It's in Saxony That There's Always Something New Going On"

In April 1556 the Italian humanist and Lyon resident Gabriel Simeoni received a letter from his correspondent Bernard Solani, a fellow scholar based in northern German lands.[77] Simeoni was so struck by the contents of this letter—and its newsworthiness—that he prepared it for publication in a

75 Jean de Marconville, *Recueil memorables d'avcvns cas merueilleux aduenuz des noz ans* (Paris: Ian Dallier, 1564). See further discussion below. Although the comet was included in all the significant German wonder books of the mid to late 1550s, it was not in the only comparable French wonder book prepared during the late 1550s: Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses les plus memorables qvi ayent esté observées* (Paris: Vincent Sertenas, 1560). It is possible that Boaistuau, as a French Protestant, left aside the 1556 comet because of its association in France with a deeply anti-Protestant discourse exemplified in the 1556 French pamphlet by Gabriel Simeoni discussed below.

76 Gabriel Simeoni [and Bernard Solani], *Les Prodiges merueilleux aduenuz & veuz en Allemaigne 1556* (Paris: Olivier d'Harsy, 1556).

77 Simeoni's preface is dated 22 April, and the publication has a privilege date of 21 May. On Simeoni, see Toussaint Renucci, *Un Aventurier des lettres au XVI^e siecle. Gabriel Symeoni*

pamphlet with his own response appended. Solani's letter informed Simeoni about the appearance during broad daylight of a wondrous new star over the northern German town of "Weimar, town of Saxony."[78] Solani, who states that his information comes in part from an unnamed doctor in the most Lutheran town of Wittenberg, reminds Simeoni of comets from antiquity, and how they always portend something specific and generally bad. This star or comet, however, was also directly accompanied by a booming voice from the sky. The words this heavenly but terrifying voice spoke are reported in the pamphlet in equally booming capital letters "OH PEOPLE OF SAXONY, CONVERT, FOR GOD IS MERCIFUL."[79] Following this, three black arcs in the shape of black moons appeared in the sky. If the beginning of this phenomenon was dramatic and wondrous, unfolding events shifted into the register of the disastrous: flames of fire vomited from the sky and burned the countryside, blood flowed from the ground, and a terrible storm destroyed many buildings and knocked down walls. In a sign that the border-crossing aspect of the prodigy was not just restricted to the heavens or indeed to print, this storm even blew the walls from one region to another.[80] Solani finishes with the warning that this all likely precedes the incursion into Europe of the Ottoman Turk, marching, he writes, with "thirty thousand horses, two hundred thousand infantrymen, and a great quantity of artillery to bring about another blow before Vienna."[81]

The pamphlet concludes with Simeoni's reply to Solani. Like Solani, Simeoni does not articulate an over-riding apocalyptic framework, though this does not mean that religious meaning and indeed polemic is not fundamental to his interpretation. He discusses issues of natural causation, precedents from antiquity, the wrath of God—especially at the sins of the people of Lutheran Saxony—and the "pernicious coming of the Turks" (*pernicieux aduenement des Turcs*), signified by the black moons that simultaneously appeared in the sky.[82] Simeoni's overriding message is that the event is a punishment by God of German Protestants, and a warning to repent and turn to the Roman church. He shores up his authority with references to similarly prodigious though

---

florentin (*1509–1570*) (Paris: Didier, 1943). I have not been able to further identify Solani, and it is possible that he is a fabrication by Simeoni.

78 "Vimart, ville de Saxe" (today in Thuringia; technically divided from 1547). Simeoni [and Solani], *Les Prodiges merueilleux*, fol. A iij verso.

79 "O SAXONIENS CONVERTISSEZ VOVS: CAR DIEV EST MISERICORDIEVZ." Ibid.

80 Ibid., fol. A iij verso–A iiij recto.

81 "xxx. mille cheuaux, cc. mille hommes de pied, & grand quantité de artillerie pour se trouuuer encor vn coup au deuant de Vienne." Ibid., fol. A iiij recto.

82 Ibid., fol. B ii recto.

unspecified signs that appeared in the Old Testament and—with a distinctly humanist flavour—to the "profane histories" (*hystoires prophanes*) of the classical world that report various prodigies, including extraordinary voices speaking from the air and from the forests.[83] In particular, Simeoni refers to Livy's account of an event during the founding era of Rome in which "a great voice seemed to issue from the grove on the top of the hill, bidding the Albans return to the religion of their fathers."[84]

This pamphlet from May 1556 springs from Simeoni's earlier observations of the comet seen over Lyon in March of that year.[85] In a lengthy pamphlet with a privilege date of 4 April 1556, he had connected antique pagan modes of interpretation with attempts to establish prodigious signs of change and even death in the French royal family.[86] But his response to Solani's letter of 14 April with its report of sightings of the comet over northern Germany moved to a new level of drama, with dimensions that stretched out well beyond France. In this Reformation context of contested interpretation, the new-found booming heavenly voice was evidently a useful way of pinning down the *meaning* of the event, definitively tying it to concepts of heresy and religious threat.

Simeoni's pamphlet incorporating Solani's text attempted to put a decisively Catholic spin on the interpretation of a highly newsworthy event, as well as providing a detailed and authoritative humanist and classical context for it.[87] It was also the basis for the presentation of the 1556 'star' or 'comet' in the only French wonder book to address its appearance. In 1562, the year of the onset of the Wars of Religion in France, Catholic Jean de Marconville's wonder book titled the *Memorable collection of marvellous events of our times* appeared.[88] Like Simeoni, Marconville turns to contemporary events in Germany. His

83 Ibid.

84 During the reign of Tullus Hostilius. Livy, *The Early History of Rome: Books 1–5*, trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt, rev. ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2002), 67. This tale is adapted for Simeoni, *Les Prodiges merueilleux*, fol. B ii verso.

85 Gabriel Symeon [Simeoni], *De la Generation, Nature, Lieu, Figures, Cours & Significations des Cometes* (Lyon: Iean Broto, 1556). See also 155–56 in Renucci, *Un aventurier des lettres*.

86 Simeoni, *De la Generation*. Simeoni assisted with astrological reports in 1556 for Henri II, king of France. Renucci, *Un aventurier des lettres*, 154.

87 Denis Crouzet sees this pamphlet as an early example of Catholic polemic, although he does not explore the comet's connection to German lands. Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, vol. 1, 167.

88 Marconville, *Recueil memorables*. Although the work first appeared in 1562 according to the USTC, I cite the more accessible 1564 edition here. On Marconville, see Richard A. Carr, Introduction, to Jean de Marconville, *De la bonté et mauvaistié des femmes*, (ed.) and annotated Richard A. Carr (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2000).

first chapter laments the terrible onset of civil war in France, while the second comparatively discusses prodigious events that had taken place during German civil conflicts, including a comet that had appeared over Saxony in 1547.[89] With direct reference to Simeoni's pamphlet, recording that it was one of his sources, Marconville also reports the 1556 "star as big as a moon" (*estoile grand comme vne Lvne*) that appeared in daylight over Weimar, and its disastrous aftermath of booming warning, fire and storm.[90]

Saxony—as a crucial region in the German civil conflict—is central to Marconville's interests. Saxony, he writes, had seen an unusually high number of disasters and wonders, and he assures his readers that "it's in Saxony that there's always something new going on."[91] Marconville's description of the 'star', only six years after its appearance, is newly set within the context of the French Wars of Religion (1562–1598). Drawing heavily upon Simeoni's pamphlet, and showing the same blurring of boundaries between different celestial phenomena, Marconville notes the Turkish threat, and lists comets that presaged destruction in antiquity.[92] Concluding in essentially the same words as Simeoni, he writes that "such things signify and presage wars, plagues, famines, treason, murder, sedition, and popular uprisings, by the will of God", and do so—Marconville concludes—to punish sinners and turn them away from sin.[93] Like Gabriel Simeoni, Marconville presents the prodigy as significant because it sends a message to the unrepentent.

Conclusion

For France in the mid 1550s and early 1560s, German lands could evidently provide a warning example of the violent civil discord released by religious conflict. The production of clear meanings for wondrous signs was an urgent task in the sixteenth century, and visual descriptions, increasingly complex textual analyses, and even—as we see here in various examples—accompanying voices were ways of pinning down meaning. Due to the number and

89 Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 42 recto.

90 Ibid., fols 45 recto–46 verso.

91 "c'est qu'en Saxe il y auoit tousiours quelque chose nouuelle." Ibid., fol. 45 recto.

92 Ibid., fols 45 verso–46 recto. Unlike Simeoni, he directly references Josephus and the destruction of Jerusalem, indicating that his text draws upon additional references.

93 "telles choses presignifient & presagent guerres, pestes, famines, trahaisons, meurtres, seditions, & mutatio[n]s populaires, par la volunté de Dieu." Ibid., fol. 46 verso.

complexity of responses to it, the 1556 comet was surely an important element of the prodigy culture that has been identified as a hallmark of the mid 1550s.[94]

Publications by Fabricius, Hebenstreit, Fincel, Lycosthenes, Simeoni, Marconville and others emerged from varying professional contexts. These texts addressed different geographical regions and spoke to audiences across the social spectrum, as—at a pragmatic level—the very different purchase price of a single broadsheet or a lengthy wonder book indicates. They drew upon a range of humanistic, biblical, and natural historical ways of understanding the meaning of comets. But differences across the publication genres are ultimately less significant than their overarching, albeit contested, religious frameworks. The speed of publication testifies not just to the comet's novelty and newsworthiness but also, it may be argued, to the urgency of the communal religious problem it presented. That this was a shared but not necessarily formulaic religious culture is evident by the variety of approaches within the publications, which included apocalyptic readings, the 'heathen' Turk, 'pagan' models from antiquity, and above all the ongoing religious conflicts within and across the borders of mid sixteenth-century Europe. These publications addressed a curious but also evidently anxious audience predisposed to interpret the 'speaking' comet as a clue to religious identity and a warning of the need for communal responses to the disordered natural world.

References

Works Published before 1800

Anon. [1556]. *Verzeichnuss des Cometen so im Anfang des mertzens erschinen ist MDLVJ*. [Strasbourg?]: [Thiebold Berger?].

———. 1556. *Warhafftige Beschreibung/ was auff einen jeden sollichen Com*[*m*]*eten gescheyen sey*. [Strasbourg]: n.p.

Baum, Johann. [1556]. *Vorzeichnu*[*e*]*s des himlischen vnd zornige Zeichens / des erschrecklichen Cometen / so jtzund im anfang des Mertzens / Anno etc. 56 allenthalben am Himmel erschienen ist*. N.p: n.p.

Cardano, Girolamo. 1557. *De rerum varietate*. Basel: Heinrichvm Petri.

Boaistuau, Pierre. 1560. *Histoires prodigieuses les plus memorables qvi ayent esté observées.* Paris: Vincent Sertenas.

Fabricius, Paulus. 1556. *Der Comet im Mertzen des Lvi. Jars. Zu*[*o*] *Wien in Osterreich erschinen*. Vienna: Hans Singriener, (15 March).

94 See n. 22.

Fabrice, Pol [Paulus Fabricius]. 1557. *Le cours et signification du comete qui a este veu lannee precedente en Mars par Masitre Pol Fabrice, mathematicien du Roy des Rommain.* Antwerp: Jean Withaye.

Fincel, Job. 1556. *Warhafftige beschreibung und gründlich verzeichnus schrecklicher Wunderzeichen und Geschichten*. Jena: Christian Ro[e]dinger.

———. 1557. *Wunderzeichen mit figuren*. Leipzig: Jacob Bärwald.

Gernhard, Bartholomaeus. 1556. *Vom Jüngsten Tag. Vier nützliche Predigten, inn Zwölff Heuptartickel*. Erfurt: S. Paul.

Goltwurm, Caspar. 1557. *Wunderwerck and Wunderzeichen Buch*. Frankfurt am Main: Zephelius.

Groslier, Claude. 1556. *Signification véridique de la comette* . . . . Montferrant: Bonaventure Belis and Jaspar de Rémortier.

Guicciardini, Ludovico. 1565. *Comentarii di Ludovici Gvicciardini delle cose piv memorabili segvite in Europa*. Antwerp: Guglielmo Siluio.

Hascard, Pierre [Peter Haschaert]. 1556. *De l'horrible Comet, Qui sest apparu en ces Regions*. Louvain: Ian Vvaen.

Hebenstreit, Johann. 1556. *Des Cometen so dieses 1556. Jars von dem 5. tag Marciij an bis auff den 20. Aprilis zu Wittemberg erschienen bedeutung.* Wittenberg: n.p.

Heller, Joachim. 1556. *Practica/ auf das M.D.LVII. Jar* . . . . Nuremberg: Joachim Heller.

Lavater, Ludwig. 1556. *Cometarvm omnivm fere catalogvs, qvi ab Avgvsto, qvo imperante Christus natus est, usque ad hunc 1556. annum apparuverunt, ex uarijs historicis collectus*. Zurich: Andrea and Jacob Gesner.

Lycosthenes, Konrad. 1557. *Prodigiorum ac ostentorum chronicon*. Basel: Henricum Petri.

———. 1557. *Wunderwerck Oder Gottes vnergrundtliches vorbildren . . . mit grossem fleiß / durch Johann Herold / vffs treüwlichst inn vier Buecher gezogen vnnd verteütscht*. Basel: Henrichum Petri.

Marconville, Jean de. 1564. *Recueil memorables d'avcvns cas merueilleux aduenuz des noz ans*. Paris: Ian Dallier.

[Neuber, Valentin?]. 1556. *Ein erschro[e]cklich wunderzeichen/ von zweyen Erdbibemem/ welche geschehen seind zu Rossanna vnnd Constaninopel/ zum M.D.L.VI. Jar*. Nuremberg: Valentin Neuber.

Pingré, G. 1783. *Cométographie ou traité historique et théorique des comètes*, 2 vols. Paris: L'imprimerie royale.

Simeoni, Gabriel [and Bernard Solani]. 1556. *Les Prodiges merueilleux aduenuz & veuz en Allemaigne 1556*. Paris: Olivier d'Harsy.

Symeon, Gabriel [Simeoni]. 1556. *De la Generation, Nature, Lieu, Figures, Cours & Significations des Cometes.* Lyon: Iean Broto.

Works Published after 1800

Bamforth, Stephen. 2010. Introduction. In Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses* (*édition de 1561*). *Edition critique*. Intro. Stephen Bamfort and annot. Jean Céard. Geneva: Droz.

Bayle, Pierre. 2000. *Various Thoughts on the Occasion of a Comet*. Trans. and intro. Robert C. Bartlett. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Brosseder, Claudia. 2004. *Im Bann der Sterne. Caspar Peucer, Philipp Melanchthon und andere Wittenberger Astrologen*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

Carr, Richard A. 2000. Introduction. In Jean de Marconville, *De la bonté et mauvaistié des femmes*. Edited and annotated by Richard A. Carr. Paris: Honoré Champion.

Céard, Jean. 1996. *La Nature et les Prodiges. L'Insolite au XVI^e siècle, en France*. Second edition. Geneva: Droz.

Crouzet, Denis. 1990. *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525–vers 1610)*. 2 vols in 1. Seyssel: Champ Vallon.

Cruz, Gaspar da. 2004 [reprint of 1953 edition]. *Treatise in which the things of China are related at great length. . . .* Translation in C. R. Boxer. *South China in the Sixteenth Century*. Bangkok: Orchid Press.

Harms, Wolfgang, and Michael Schilling (eds.). 2005. *Deutsche Illustrierte Flugblätter des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Band VI. Teil 1: Die Wickiana (1500–1569)*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

Hellman, C. Doris. 1944. *The Comet of 1577: Its Place in the History of Astronomy*. New York: AMS Press.

Hind, J. Russell. 1857. *The Comet of 1556*. London: John W. Parker and Son.

Josephus, Flavius. 1981. *The Jewish War*. Trans. G. A. Williamson, rev. and new intro. E. Mary Smallwood. London: Penguin Books.

Kurihara, Ken. 2014. *Celestial Wonders in Reformation Germany*. London: Pickering and Chatto.

Littrow, Karl von. 1917. The Observations of Fabricius and Heller of the Comet of 1556. Trans. A. S. Herschel. *Monthly Notices: Royal Astronomical Society, London* 77: 633–43.

Mauelshagen, Franz. 1998. Illustrierte Kometenflugblätter in wahrnehmungsgeschichtlicher Perspektive. In *Das illustratierte Flugblatt in der Kultur der Frühen Neuzeit*, (eds.) Wolfgang Harms and Michael Schilling, 101–36. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

———. 2008. *Wunderkammer auf Papier. Die Wickiana zwischen Reformation und Volksglaube*. Zurich: n.p.

Monter, E. William. 1999. *Judging the French Reformation: Heresy Trials by Sixteenth-century Parlements*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Niccoli, Ottavia. 1990. *Prophecy and People in Renaissance Italy*. Trans. Lydia G. Cochrane. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Nouhuys, Tabitta van. 1998. *The Age of Two-Faced Janus: The Comets of 1577 and 1618 and the Decline of the Aristotelian World View in the Netherlands*. Leiden: Brill.

Pettegree, Andrew. 2010. *The Book in the Renaissance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Renucci, Toussaint. 1943. *Un Aventurier des lettres au XVI^e siecle. Gabriel Symeoni florentin (1509–1570)*. Paris: Didier.

Schechner, Sara J. 1997. *Comets, Popular Culture, and the Birth of Modern Cosmology.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Schenda, Rudolf. 1963. Die deutschen Prodigiensammlungen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* 4 1963: 637–710.

———. 1961. *Die französische Prodigienliteratur in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts.* Munich: Max Hueber Verlag.

Silver, Larry. 1999. Nature and Nature's God: Landscape and Cosmos of Albrecht Altdorfer. *Art Bulletin* 81.2: 194–214.

Soergel, Philip. 2012. *Miracles and the Protestant Imagination: The Evangelical Wonder Book in Reformation Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Spinks, Jennifer. 2009. *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany.* London: Pickering and Chatto.

———. 2013. Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-Century France: The *Histoires prodigieuses*, Confessional Identity, and the Wars of Religion. *Renaissance Studies* 27.1: 73–96.

Spinks, Jennifer, and Charles Zika. 2012. The Four Horsemen: An Introduction. In *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster*, (eds.) Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, 1–12. Exhibition catalogue. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria.

Walsham, Alexandra. 1999. *Providence in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Zeller, Rosemarie. 2014. Reading Images of Natural Disaster in Printed Media of Early Modern Europe. In *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia*, (eds.) Gerrit Schenk and Monica Juneja, 55–70. Regensburg: Schnell and Steiner.

Zika, Charles. 2014. Visual Signs of Imminent Disaster in the Sixteenth-Century Zurich Archive of Johann Jacob Wick. In *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia*, (eds.) Gerrit Schenk and Monica Juneja, 43–53. Regensburg: Schnell and Steiner.

CHAPTER 11

Disorder in the Natural World: The Perspectives of the Sixteenth-Century Provincial Convent

Susan Broomhall

This essay examines how nuns from a provincial convent interpreted disorder in the natural world in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century France. The Benedictine Abbey of Beaumont-lès-Tours lay on the outskirts of the provincial, royalist, and Catholic town of Tours: a town that maintained the Parisian *parlement* in exile during the 1590s. This foremost monastic institution for women in Touraine drew its members from the elite families of the region.[1] Among its archives remain both a regular journal documenting the latter half of the sixteenth century and a chronicle spanning the sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century, both produced as collaborative works by nuns in the convent. These two records provide important insights into the dynamic nature of early modern interpretations of anomalies in the natural world and the contexts in which these interpretations occurred. In these two formats, made at different times and for distinct purposes, nuns recorded and contextualized a wide variety of notable natural events over more than a thirty-year period. This essay will examine how such disorders were presented and contextualized within the nuns' texts, and the changing meanings they gave to such events.

Events perceived as disasters in the natural world could take a wide variety of forms in the early modern period, from monstrous births, blood rain, unusual light or cloud formations in the sky to floods, fires, and earthquakes. Widespread scholarly interest in the interpretation of such events in sixteenth-century France emerged in the wake of Jean Céard's detailed examination of the subject under the term *les prodiges*.[2] Céard studied key literary, medical

1 For more on the abbey of Beaumont-lès-Tours and its experiences during the sixteenth century, see Susan Broomhall, *Women and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), ch. 1, and Susan Broomhall, "Convent Voices on Social and Familial Networks in Later Sixteenth-Century France," Special issue: *Early Modern Convent Voices: The World and the Cloister*, (ed.) Thomas M. Carr, *Studies in Early Modern France* 11 (2007): 59–74.

2 Jean Céard, *La Nature et les prodiges*, second edition (Geneva: Droz, 1996); two of the most recent additions to this literature are Elaine Fulton and Penny Roberts, "The Wrath of God:

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_013

and popular printed texts of the sixteenth century to advance his argument that the interpretation of *prodiges* as cumulative signs of God's power, wrath or glory later changed, and for sceptical readers such as Montaigne or the teratologists of the later decades of the century, could instead be understood as independent and individual events or objects in a natural, rather than supernatural, framework. Katharine Park and Lorraine J. Daston, in their work on monsters and wonders, similarly charted transitions from supernatural to natural interpretations that underpinned discussions of monsters, as well as a shift in terms of the relationship between learned and popular interpretations of their meaning by the end of the early modern period.[3] Regarding sixteenth-century France in particular, Denis Crouzet has analyzed an extensive array of popular *canards* to argue for their important role in creating a climate of apocalyptic fear and their significance as part of the ultra-Catholic League's religious program and practice.[4] A key aspect of these studies has been their focus on the printed presentation and interpretation of such events, with studies of the wonder book and of *canards* emphasizing the importance of visual material to interpretive frameworks and reader reception.[5] What we know less about however is, firstly, how readers interpreted such printed texts and, sec-

---

Explanations of Crisis and Natural Disaster in Pre-Modern Europe," in *History at the End of the World? History, Climate Change and the Possibility of Closure*, (eds.) Mark Levene, Rob Johnson and Penny Roberts (Penrith: Humanities-Ebooks, 2010), 67–79; Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika (eds.), *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster* (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2012).

3 Katharine Park and Lorraine J. Daston, "Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England," *Past and Present* 92 (1981): 20–54; Lorraine J. Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone Books, 1998).

4 Firstly in his article, "La représentation du temps à l'époque de la Ligue," *Revue historique* 270.2 (1983): 297–388, and then within his larger study of violence, *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion* (*v. 1525–v. 1610*), 2 vols (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990).

5 For the *canard*, Jean-Pierre Séguin, *L'Information en France avant le périodique. 517 canards imprimés entre 1529 et 1631* (Paris: Editions Maisonneuve et Larose, 1964) and more recently, on the wonderbook (in Germany), see the recent work of Jennifer Spinks, *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009); (in France) Jennifer Spinks, "Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-Century France: the *Histoires prodigieuses*, Confessional Identity, and the Wars of Religion," *Renaissance Studies* 27,1 (2013): 73–96; and Jennifer Spinks, "Monsters and Heavenly Signs," in Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks, and Charles Zika (eds.), *The Four Horsemen*: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster, exh. cat. (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria), 47–61.

ondly, whether the interpretations that individual readers formed about these events changed over time, in response to different contexts.[6]

What was the readership of such material? Jeffrey K. Sawyer estimated that the most popular, Catholic, political pamphlets of the early seventeenth century made it into the hands of only one percent of France's urban population,[7] although recent scholars have suggested a wider range of influence for sixteenth-century printed words and images.[8] Moreover, did those who could access these materials accept the interpretations that these learned texts and popular pamphlets offered to them? Céard considers much of the popular *prodiges* literature as sensational and designed to entertain, perhaps even to frighten, its readers. However, his analysis of Montaigne, both as published author and as reader of such texts, offers an example of a learned reader sceptical of the supernatural meanings of such disasters that were widely suggested in pamphlet literature. Crouzet argues for this literature's intention to instruct, as part of a pedagogical program, and presents a number of *livres de raison* accounts that appeared to accept supernatural interpretations of (generally) divine retribution and the calls for prayer and penitence that concluded such popular works.[9] There has been little consideration to date, however, as to whether readers accepted such interpretations as valid for all the disasters that they perceived in the natural world around them, or only for those events about which they were informed by *canard*-type literature. Furthermore, could a reader's views about the meaning of disordered events change over time? The documents studied in this chapter offer just such an opportunity to learn more, for the Beaumont nuns' journal was composed as these remarkable events were experienced and their chronicle later made note of those unusual events that they perceived to be key to the community's past.

Like all historical narratives, early modern chronicles and journals attempted in some way to make sense of events (including strange, surprising and fearsome ones) in the world around them.[10] In both genres, one can find

---

6 The first of these questions is explored further in Susan Broomhall, "Reader Response: What Sixteenth-Century French People Did with Printed News of the World," in Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika (eds.), *Disaster, Death and the Emotions in the Shadow of the Apocalypse, 1400–1700*, (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming).

7 Jeffrey K. Sawyer, *Printed Poison: Pamphlet Propaganda, Faction Politics, and the Public Sphere in Early Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 48.

8 Luc Racaut, *Hatred in Print: Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

9 See his article, "La représentation du temps."

10 Jörn Rüsen, "Using History: The Struggle over Traumatic Experiences of the Past in Historical Culture," *Historein* 11 (2011): 14–18. See his *History: Narration—Interpretation—*

records that suggested disorder in the natural world such as odd weather, prophecies, astrological signs, fires, floods, earthquake and monsters. However, there are also distinctions between texts, such as diaries and journals, in which events were recorded more immediately after they occurred, and others, such as chronicles and *mémoires*, that functioned as sites in which such experiences were historicized. In the former, the logic that made sense of the events' inclusion was not always foregrounded, whereas chronicles, *mémoires* and histories tended to provide a more explicit narrative framework to explain the selection of content that they contained. Furthermore, interpretive frameworks for such events were also dependent on identities that both constructed the narrative and were constructed through it.[11] What the Beaumont nuns wrote in their journal and chronicle depended therefore on how they understood, and sought to present, themselves through these documents.

When both formats were produced by a single author or by collective authors as is the case here, we have a rare opportunity to examine whether, and how, a re-ordering and re-prioritization of unusual occurrences and their meanings for different times and audiences could take place. It is possible that such re-valuing of the information collected could also occur within a journal, simply by deleting lines, burning pages, or indeed a whole document, in ways that are lost to modern readers. However, there is no particular evidence to suggest this was the case for the nuns of Beaumont-lès-Tours. The Beaumont journal surveys the period from 1577 to 1610, while the chronicle covered a longer timespan from 1510 to 1657.[12] This chronicle included some material from the journal, but it was evidently not its only source of information. It is possible that different community members contributing to these documents remembered different events, but there were also significant distinctions in their context and readership. These documents allow us to explore which unusual events were deemed important to record at the time or in the aftermath, and the different resonances and perspectives they display in these contexts. They allow an examination of how both the prodigious and the disastrous were

Orientation (New York: Berghahn, 2005). For analysis of violence in other sixteenth-century narrative formats, Susan Broomhall, "Disturbing Memories: Narrating Experiences and Emotions of Distressing Events in the French Wars of Religion," in *Memory Before Modernity: Memory Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Judith Pollmann, Erika Kuijpers, Johannes Müller, and Jasper van der Steen (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 253–67; Susan Broomhall, "Reasons and Identities to Remember: Composing Personal Accounts of Religious Violence in Sixteenth-Century France," *French History* 27 (2013): 1–20.

11 Anthony Paul Kerby, *Narrative and the Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

12 Archives départementales d'Indre-et-Loire (hereafter ADIL), H 796, Journal, 1577–1610; ADIL, H 794, Chronique, 1510–1657.

understood by contemporaries as these events occurred, and how they could be incorporated into a narrative history of the abbey suitable for its readers of the early seventeenth century.

In addition, few analyses about wonder, disorder or apocalyptic fears include material that was produced by women and which might reveal their experiences of natural disorder and their interpretations of a world in flux around them. These documents offer a rare prospect to add analysis of the voices and thoughts of cloistered women about such events to those interpretations made by relatively elite men that have been primarily studied to date. These women recorded key events in the world as they perceived it from within a monastic institution. Study of their interpretations in such works, and the sources from which these derived, can nuance our understanding of eschatological influences in the immediate wake of renewed Catholic reform and the religious fighting in France. The significance of this case study is thus in expanding the range of interpretations of such events that we can access, in seeing how printed texts shaped what people thought, and how a community's perspective could change over time.

Sourcing Disasters

Although anonymous, the journal written by the nuns of Beaumont-lès-Tours appears to have been the work of successive nuns over the later sixteenth century. This journal was not a day-by-day journal so much as a collection of events only partially chronologically ordered. Changes of manuscript hand as well as of the scope of the events documented suggest the participation of a number of nuns in the production of this document. Some of the journal's authors stuck firmly to details of novitiates, professions, and general chapter meetings. The author of the material for the late 1570s, for example, appears entirely pragmatic in her interests in financial and social matters within the convent. On the other hand, the nun who documented activities for 1583 appears to have had a keen interest in local gossip in the wider Touraine community, as will be explored below. Other nuns encompassed national, political and religious events in their entries in the journal of the Beaumont community's experiences. In this way, the journal may have reflected something of the experience of community in the convent itself: providing rich evidence of discernible convent voices bound together in a unified textual activity.

What then were the sources of knowledge for disorder and disaster that the nuns included in their work? Sometimes the nuns were themselves eyewitnesses to such events. The physical barriers of the raised convent walls did not

prevent the nuns from reporting in May 1591 on a fire that had ravaged the abbey of Marmoutier across the river Loire, which they had been able to see "from our dormitory at 2 in the morning and it is said that it was still burning the next evening."[13] The nuns were able to gather details about how the fire had begun, noting that it had occurred because of the negligence of a boy guarding the fires. This information was evidently garnered through the convent's social networks after the event. Historians have contributed much to understanding the permeability of European convent walls, and revealed how nuns participated in their local communities in myriad ways.[14] It is clear from the Beaumont journal that, whatever form the strict enclosure of the convent that was enforced in the 1560s took, it did not prevent the nuns from participating in communication networks beyond the convent in ways that enabled them to know about local events, gossip, community activities, even if they had not witnessed them personally.[15] The use of such phrases as "one says that" or "there is a rumour" are liberal throughout the journal, such as when reporting on Huguenot activities in the area that ultimately threatened their safety: "In September, a rumour arose that the Huguenots had taken the chateau of Angers, which was found to be true."[16] Clearly, the nuns maintained strong familial, ecclesiastical and local links beyond the convent that enabled them to know about many events that they had not witnessed at first hand.

On some occasions, the manner of transmission was revealed in the journal. Nuns' relatives evidently provided one source of information about the world as they came to visit. In February 1578, "there were rumours that Monsieur the brother of the King, being with the King his brother, escaped from him and at night fled from Paris in disguise at Sainte Genevieve and went to Angers and the

13 "on le voyent de n[ot]re dortoieur et encores a ii heures et dict on quil y estoit encoires le lendemain au soir", ADIL H 796, 239.

14 Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt, "Discipline, Vocation, and Patronage: Spanish Religious Women in a Tridentine Microclimate," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 30 (1999): 1009–30; Elizabeth A. Lehfeldt, "Convents as Litigants: Dowry and Inheritance Disputes in Early-Modern Spain," *Journal of Social History* 33.3 (2000): 645–64; Kate J. P. Lowe, *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Claire Walker, *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English Convents in France and the Low Countries*, (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Broomhall, *Women and Religion.*

15 The renewed 1564 statues are recorded in Bibliothèque municipale de Tours, manuscrit 1332. For discussion of the enclosure of Beaumont-lès-Tours, see Broomhall, *Women and Religion*, ch. 1.

16 "En septembre s'est leve ung bruict que les Huguenots avoient prins le chasteau d'angiers ce qui s'est trouve veritable," ADIL H 796, 172.

Queen Mother after him."[17] The sentence continued: "Near the end of February Monsieur de la Bourdaisière came to see Madame de la Bourdaisière his good wife and told her that Monsieur the King's brother had chased out the majority of his household."[18] This was not, it seems, information that was exchanged secretly, but rather was seen as sufficiently significant to warrant documentation in the journal. The Bourdaisière family were closely connected with the abbey.[19] Indeed, the abbess retired to her family home at La Bourdaisière along with her four nieces and a number of the other sisters, when in September 1587 there were "great troubles and tremors in this land" caused by Huguenot troops in the area.[20]

Print publications formed another source. In 1585, the nuns were able to report the glorious conversion of three Japanese princes by Jesuits—information that seems most likely to have reached the convent via print.[21] In May, they announced in the journal a new conflict led by the Guise faction, providing lists of the major protagonists, the towns that had joined in support of the Guise, and their specific demands of the King.[22] Although the convent was not without important contacts to the court and Paris, the level of detail and articulation of the major arguments underpinning the faction's position suggests that the nuns had access to printed materials of different kinds. Soon after, they itemized details of the King's edict calling upon all his subjects to return to the Catholic Church.[23] Several pages later, a copy of the King's printed edict was bound into the text.[24] In May 1588, the nuns wrote of

17 "En feb[vrier] 1578 le bruyt fut q[ue] monsieur frere du Roy estant a paris avec le Roy son frere/ se desroba de luy / e[t] que de nuyt il sortit par sus les murs de la ville de paris en habit d[i]ssimule a lendroyt de Ste Geneviesve et sen alla a angers et la roine mere apres luy," ADIL H 796, fol. 59 recto.

18 "Environ le penultime de feb[vrier] monsieur de la bourdaisier vint veoir madame de la bourdaisiere la bonne femme et ladvertit que mond[i]t sieur frere du Roy avoit chase la plus part de ceulx de sa maison," ADIL H 796, fol. 59 recto.

19 Strong dynastic patronage of particular convents was common at this period. See Joanne Baker, "Female Monasticism and Family Strategy: The Guises and Saint Pierre de Reims," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 28.4 (1997): 1091–108.

20 "grandz troubles et tremeurs en ce pays," ADIL H 796, 218.

21 ADIL H 796, 168.

22 ADIL H 796, 172–3.

23 "Environ le moys de juillet se sont traictes quelques accords entre le Roy et lesd[its] princes et le xviii dud[it] moys de juillet le Roy a faict publier et lire en la court de parlement a paris ne[*sic* en] sa presence son edict sur la reunion de tous ses subjects a eglise catholicq[ue] ap[osto]liq[ue] et Romaine dont la teneur sensuyt," ADIL H 796, 172.

24 *Sur la reunion de ses subjects a l'eglise Catholicque, Apostoloqie & Romain* (Tours: veufve de Rene Siffleau, 1585), ADIL H 796, 175–90.

the Duke of Guise's arrival in Paris after his "miraculous victory obtained by the special grace of God" in November 1587, and included a "copy of the letter written to the King by monsieur the Duke of Guise on 17th May 1588",[25] as well as an "extract of another letter written by monsieur Lord of Guise."[26]

Similarly, the 1583 reports of wondrous objects in the sky over Paris and Brie, one of the few overt references to portents, suggest derivation from a pamphlet. These events are even given a title that was indented from the normal flow of the text: "Some great signs and wondrous facts that occurred in the present year 1583 at Paris and in Brie."[27] These signs were the cause, in the nuns' account, of a series of penitential processions: the white processions of 1583. Madeleine Lazard and Denis Crouzet have both examined these processions of 1583, which Crouzet has argued represent a prime example of the eschatological anxiety that gripped France after the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre.[28] He noted the processions' widespread appearance in the work of local chroniclers and its documentation in pamphlet literature.[29] How then did the nuns in distant Tours know? Certainly they were able to reproduce a lengthy account of the various phases of the processions contemporaneously. Like the prodigious events of Brie and France, this too is given a title, that, if not identical, is certainly similar to that of a known pamphlet about the processions.[30]

Diarizing Disorder

It seems likely, therefore, that nuns drew on a range of sources for their information about wondrous and disastrous events—their own eyes, their local contacts, as well as wider national networks, and, finally, printed literature. What kinds of disastrous events in the natural world were deemed sufficiently significant to be recorded by the Beaumont nuns? How did the authors try to

25 "apres la victoire miraculeuse obtenue par specialle grace de Dieu"; 'Copie de la let[t]re escripte Au Roy par monseigneur le duc de Guyse le xviie may 1588," ADIL H 796, 226.

26 "extrait d'aultre l[ett]re escripte par monsieur Sieur de Guise," ADIL H 796, 228–31.

27 "De grands signes et faictz prodigieux advenus en ceste p[rese]nte annee 1583 A Paris et en la Brie," ADIL H 796, 72.

28 Madeleine Lazard, "Les processions blanches de la Ligue dans le *Registre-Journal* de Pierre de L'Estoile," in *L'Expression de l'inoubliable dans les mémoires d'Ancien Régime*, (ed.) Jean Garapon (Nantes: C. Defaut, 2005), 35–44; and Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, vol. 2, 298.

29 Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, vol. 2, 298.

30 "Des grands processions qui se sont faictes par les habitans des frontieres de la haulte Allemaigne des Ardenes et aultres pays de Brie et champaigne en ceste ann[ee] 1583," ADIL H 796, 73.

understand these events as they recorded them in their journal of life in the convent during the later sixteenth century?

The Beaumont journal certainly recorded events that frightened community members and those around them as they occurred. In their discussion of natural forces in disorder, we find flood, storms, fires and earthquakes noted over the period covered by the journal. In January 1579, the journal author noted: "On Monday the 26th of the month between seven and six in the morning there was a terrible earthquake that was almost universal and most remarkable. At Tours there were general processions to implore divine mercy."[31] This event was clearly perceived to be unusual and the response was a religious one that implied that its cause might be supernatural. Significantly, the nuns focussed here on the town's collective response, rather than any individual interpretations or indeed their own specific feelings or reactions to the event.

Other records of disaster suggested surprise at the unusual occurrence, but focussed on practical needs that resulted from the event, rather than its causes. In September 1586, the nuns recorded a flood:

> the waters began to rise all of a sudden, in such a way that in the night of Tuesday and Wednesday . . . the poor neighbours all around our house were surprised by it, such that some had to go to fetch boats, others constrained to climb on their houses. Some lost a great number of cattle and sheep that had been surprised by the water in their fields. On Wednesday morning, the water had risen so excessively that the boats came to the entry of our great gate at the entrance to our monastery.[32]

The author continued further with a detailed list of what damage was done to the abbey, but the tone seems one of fascination and lament for the damage wrought by "such impetuous and furious water."[33] In this episode, there was

31 "Le lu[n]di xxvie dud[it] moy[s] e[t] ann[ee] entre vi e[t] vii heures du matin il sest faict ung terrible tre[m]blement de terre qui a este quasi universel et fort espouventable on en a faict a Tours les proce[s]sions g[é]n[ér]ales po[u]r implorer la divine misericorde," ADIL H 796, fol. 3r.

32 "les eaues ont commence a coistre fort a coup De maniere qu[e] la nuyt dentre le mardi et le mercredi . . . les pauvres voisines tout alentours de n[ot]re maison en ont este surp[ris] dont en failloit aller querir les ungs par bateau les aultres contrainctz monter au planche de leurs maisons Aulcungs y ont perdu grand nombre de bestail et moutons qui ont este surp[ri]s de leau en leurs champs. Led[it] jour de me[r]credi matin elle creut si excessivement que les bateaux venoient jusques alentree de n[ot]re grand porte de lentree de n[ot]re monastere," ADIL H 796, 204.

33 "leau sy impetueuse et furieuse," ADIL H 796, 204.

no reference to the divine at all, not as a source of the freak of nature nor in the community's response to the event. Indeed the account ended with what seemed most significant to the convent community, that the flood had caused the great gates of the monastery to remain open for two full days as they could not be held shut against the pressure of the water.[34]

In a similar way, a storm of May 1593 was recorded principally, it seems, because of the damage that it caused the community. As our author recounted:

> On 27 May 1593 Ascension Day, at around seven in the evening, came a storm so furious with hail so large that several stones were like nuts and made a great deal of damage. It broke the great painted window of St John Baptist in the nave of the church that madame Jeanne Viau, abbess of this monastery, had had made and all that remains is the top part that one can still see.[35]

Once again, the report marvelled at the unusual nature of the weather event but did not imply a supernatural cause or a religious response.

In a very different vein to these entries regarding local dramatic natural events were the 1583 reports of prodigious signs in the sky over Paris and Brie. These were firmly recorded as portents that required Catholics to repent. Some two pages of details were included about the events in that year, much more than was regularly attributed in the journal to disordered occurrences closer to home and suggests something of its perceived importance for the nuns at the time. These signs included a fiery battle that took place in the sky over the churches of Paris. "Those who saw it," the nuns recorded, "heard the lance and cutlass blows, the battle in the sky lasting from eleven at night until three in the morning."[36] In Brie lightning struck wheat in a field that, when milled,

34 "les deux grandz portes sont demourees ouvertes tout le jour depuis le jeudi matin jusques au vendredi au soir parce que alocca[si]on de leau qui venoit jusques bien avant au dedans de nous ou ne la pouvoit fermer," ADIL H 796, 204.

35 "Le 27^{e} May 1593 Jour de l'Ascension sur les sept heures du soir, survint une tempeste si furieuse avec gresle si grosse que quelque grains estoient comme des noix et fist un grand degast au biens. Elle brisa toute la grand vitre peinte de Histoire de St Jean Baptiste de la nef de lesglise du deans que madame Jeanne Viau abbesse de ce monastere avoit fait faire et nen demeura que la haut que ce voit encore a present," ADIL H 796, 242.

36 "ceulx que les voyoient e[n]tendonnent les coups de lance et de coutelas et durant ceste bataille au ciel depuis les xi heures de nuyt jusques a trois heures du matin," ADIL H 796, 72.

rendered nothing but blood.[37] An infant being baptized miraculously warned the attendees to repent of their sins.[38] In a village near Bayeux, a naked woman with no hair, holding a beautiful bird, warned a small child in a field that people needed to amend their ways. She then descended into the water.[39] Two young gentlemen walking in a field came across two angels dressed in white. The list of these "great signs and wondrous facts that occurred in the present year 1583 at Paris and in Brie" flowed directly into discussion of the mass processions and marches that that swept Germany and the north of France in their wake. By comparison to other entries, the nuns included detailed and copious information about this train of events that, as noted above, suggests that they were reading one of the printed pamphlets known to have been published about the processions. This episode was interpreted as a sign of the need for Catholics to repent. By recording these matters in prodigious terms, it appears that the nuns supported the supernatural interpretation that they seem likely to have gathered from printed literature.

If wondrous events could occur, as it seems was possible, they did not happen in the nuns' own experience or sight. Events at home were rarely quite so marvellous, even when they were mysterious. In December 1583, the journal author recorded a curious incident within the convent where, after lunch, "the little bell of the refectory that is in the middle of Madame's table began to chime without anyone touching it and chimed most strongly as was said five to six times and one could see the cord moving without anyone touching it."[40] Although its author stopped short of expressing an explicit interpretation of any kind about this event, the fact that this text appeared just one page after the discussion of the prodigious events above perhaps suggests that our Beaumont nun felt this might be a little marvel of their own. Nothing more was ever reported about this event and it does not appear to have been investigated further.

---

37 "Plus en plusieurs lieux de Brie tout soubdain est descendu ung feu de ciel dedans ung tonnoirre Lequel se brusla ung grand champ de froment," "le mectantz au moulin au lieu de farine il ne rendoit que du sang," ADIL H 796, 72.

38 "Ung enfant estant baptize par miracle a parle disant aux assistants quil estoit besoing que le monde amendast sa vie," ADIL H 796, 73.

39 "Oultre est advenu en ung village nomme Benchi pres Bayeux qu'en ung pre une femme incongneue toute nue se p[rese]nta a ung enfant laquelle n'avoit cheveulx quelconques et tenoit ung bel oyseau lequel dist au jeune enfant que ch[ac]un amende sa vie puys en laiz sen revola et la femme se desendit au bort de leau," ADIL H 796, 72.

40 "la petite cloche du refe[c]touez qui est au millieu de la table de madame commencea a sonner sans que personne y touchast et son[n]a comme lon dict v ou vi coups fort fermes et on voyoit branslez la corde sans que personne la touchast," ADIL H 796, 77.

Another category of disorder reported by the journal authors was of a different nature. This was a kind of disorder in the natural order of human society. Plague and other contagious events were relatively frequently recorded in the journal. However, one entry, from October 1583, told an extended story of one wealthy family who, during a plague outbreak in Tours, had left their ailing daughter to the care of a disobedient servant. This servant, however, broke the family's trust, attempting to murder the daughter and steal the family's possessions. Our author concluded the story with the subsequent capture and hanging of the servant.[41] More usually, the unfortunate circumstances in which named victims in the local community had died in contagion outbreaks, and their hasty or unceremonious burial during that time, appeared in the journal's record of outbreak episodes. These details seem to have been intended for a spiritual purpose, preparing the nuns for death at any moment. Such disease events were not, it seems, considered by the nuns within an apocalyptic framework of increasing frequency or magnitude.

Crouzet has suggested that contemporaries' recording of such events can be understood as "an act of faith." He observed that their presentation typically highlighted the growing intensity of such phenomena. Collecting disasters was thus a religious act. It is hard to find consistent evidence that the nuns noted these events as signs of end times. This does not disprove Crouzet's thesis, but it does suggest that there were a range of reasons why people, even amongst fervent Catholics, were recording such events. In the Beaumont journal, the nuns noted disastrous events that affected their building and lifestyle, or that impacted their family, community and friends. Most commonly, disordered nature appeared remarkable simply because it was unusual rather than conclusively supernatural in its occurrence. Even if such weather events were considered by the nuns to be portents, their meanings were not rendered explicit. What emerges in the journal was the nuns' consistent attention to the emotional response of local communities to these disastrous episodes—both in what scared or surprised the townspeople and in how they dealt with each crisis. This may have been a coping mechanism employed by the authors, projecting the affective impact of these events onto others and allowing the nuns to affirm a sense of distance and separation from frightening events, a distance that was not simply physical but also emotional.

The few examples of natural disorder that were considered in a prodigious light appear to have been sourced from printed texts, generally concerning events far away that the nuns did not witness themselves. These were interpreted as divine calls for repentance by the journal authors, just as was insisted

41 ADIL H 796, 71.

in the printed texts upon which the nuns appear to have relied. Recording remarkable events that had been brought to the abbey's attention through print, as well as the movement and victories of Catholic troops, was critical. It confirmed a sense of the convent's identity, allegiance to, and participation in a wider, international Catholic community.

The Longevity of Disaster: The Chronicle

Turning now to the chronicle, we have a chance to review how the use and meaning of wondrous events altered from the perspective of a later period, for the chronicle was, at least for the period covering the later sixteenth century, a document of review. In its scope, the chronicle appears to have been an intentionally selective historical document that drew upon convent archives to document the events of its recent past. It is evident that for the discussion of the late sixteenth century the journal forms one of the primary sources of information for the chronicle authors, together with other monastic documents. However, the focus and context of the material differs between the rather jumbled information of the journal and the coherent chronicle, permitting an examination of how Beaumont's sixteenth-century experiences were re-drawn into a narrative framework suitable for the community in the early seventeenth century. What wondrous, unusual or disastrous events mattered as the seventeenth-century sisters sought to craft a narrative of their abbey's significant activities in the sixteenth century?

Not all the disordered events that the journal authors had recorded made their way into the later convent chronicle. Murders, local gossip and the pitiable deaths of the Tours citizens during episodes of contagion did not retain meaning in the convent's later re-telling of its fortunes during that period. Likewise, wondrous elements such as the prodigious signs in the country's north held no specific relationship to the abbey of Beaumont-lès-Tours, despite this being an episode that had so captivated the imagination of contemporary nuns that pages of the journal had been filled with precise details about it. National political events could find a place in the chronicle in so far as they documented the triumph of Catholicism or had impacted the Beaumont sisters personally, such as when they had been forced to move from the convent during times of Huguenot attack.

However, episodes of seeming disorder in the natural world did appear to retain a meaning for the community and were thus included in its chronicle. Some accounts appeared almost drawn word-for-word from the journal. For

example, the flood of 1586 retained the journal author's dramatic description and her eye for detail:

> On the 22nd and 23rd of the month the waters began to rise suddenly, so much that in the night between Tuesday and Wednesday, it was so furious that the neighbours all around this house were surprised, that it was necessary to come and fetch them by boat, the others constrained to get on their houses, some lost a great number of cattle and sheep that were surprised by the water in their grange. On Wednesday morning, it rose so excessively that the boats came right up to the entrance of the great door of the monastery. . . . near the grange, the water was so impetuous and furious that it brought down the walls of the enclosure, on the side of the *clos* some thirty yards, with such a loud noise that it seemed like thunder and a storm; in an instant the enclosure and all the garden up to the stables was filled with water; the grange was also filled with water almost to the height of a person.[42]

Like the journal, the chronicle compiler provided no explicit framework through which such an event was to be interpreted, nor did this event appear to cause damage that warranted mention as an explanation for the present physical spaces of the convent or its decorative programme. It had simply occurred: an important and rare event. The 1593 storm was likewise mentioned, as in the journal, only in terms of the hail that had destroyed the painted windows of St John the Baptist in the nave of the church.[43]

---

42 "Le 22e et 23e dudit mois les eaux commencerent a croistre fort a coup, de maniere que la nuit d'entre le mardi et le mercredi, elle fut si furieuse que les voisins de tout l'alentour de ceste maison furent surpris, qu'il failloit en aller querir les uns par bateau, les autres contraincts de monter sur le plancher de leurs maisons, plusieurs y ont perdu grand nombre de bestial et moutons qui ont este surpris de l'eau en leur grange. Ledit jour de mercredi matin, ele creut si excessivement que les bateaux venoient jusques a l'entrée de la grande porte du monastere. . . . devers la grange, l'eau estoit si impetueuse et furieuse qu'elle renversa par terre les murailles de l'enclos, du coste du clos quelque trente toises, avec un si grand bruit, qu'il sembloit d'un tonnaire et tempeste; en un instant la closture fut remplie d'eau et tous les jardins jusques aux estables des bestes; la grange fut aussi remplie d'eau, a la hauteur presque d'une personne." ADIL H 794, unnumbered folios; also available in a printed edition, Charles de Grandmaison, *Chronique de l'Abbaye de Beaumont-Lez-Tours* (Tours: Rouillé-Ladevèze, 1877), 47.

43 "Le 27 de may 1593, jour de l'Ascension de Nostre-Seigneur, sur les sept heures du soir, survint une furieuse tempeste, avec une gresle si grosse, qu'elle estoit comme des noix,

In a few cases, however, the chronicler elaborated on the interpretation of and response to such natural disorders that had been provided by the journal authors. Regarding the 1579 earthquake, for example, the chronicler noted that "it seemed that everything was upside down in this town of Tours, the citizens were extremely afraid and for this, those of the clergy made general processions to implore divine mercy, and we, for this end, also made processions."[44] Just as the journal account had done, this statement projected most of the confusion and fear on to the wider community, seemingly distancing the convent from these beliefs. Yet, at the same time, the chronicle noted (as the journal had not) that the convent had participated in the religious activities and processions invoking divine mercy that had followed the event. Did this additional information reflect later beliefs within the convent about the supernatural cause of these earlier events, or was its primary purpose to show that the sisters had responded to the emotional and devotional needs of the wider community of which they were an integral spiritual part, or perhaps some combination of both these ideas?

The chronicle's reporting of several other disasters in the natural world that occurred both before and after the period covered by the journal, helps to provide an answer. These reflected the two features that were familiar to the journal's presentation of such events. A lightning strike of May 1567 was remembered thus: "In the year 1567, the vigil of the Holy Sacrament, on the 29th of May, lightning struck the bell, at eight in the morning, and broke all the cover, which cost 60 livres to repair."[45] Our chronicler recounted the damage done to much of the building, injuries to nuns and the general panic that it caused: "It also broke the ladder and injured some nuns and gave very great

---

et fist un grand degast en ceste maison, brisant quantite de vitres et, entre autres, la grand vitre peinte de la nef de l'eglise, de l'histoire de Jean-Baptiste, que Madame Jeanne Viau, abbesse, avoit fait faire, et n'en demeura que le haut de ladite vitre," ADIL H 794; Grandmaison, *Chronique*, 55.

44 "Le lundi 26e de janvier 1579, entre 6 et 7 heures du matin, s'est fait un epouvantable tremblement de terre, qui a este, tant par tous les lieux de nostre monastere, que lieux circonvoisins, qu'il sembloit que tout deubt renverser en ceste ville de Tours; les citoyens ont este extremement effrayes et pour ce subject, ceux du clerge ont fait des processions generales pour implorer la divine misericorde, et nous, a ceste fin, avons aussi fait des processions," ADIL H 794; Grandmaison, *Chronique*, 41.

45 "En l'annee 1567, le vigile du saint sacrement, le 29e de mai, le tonnerre tomba, sur les huit heures du matin, sur le clocher, et briza toute la couverture, et pour le reparer il en fut paye lx livres," ADIL H 794; Grandmaison, *Chronique*, 27.

fright, rolling around the church like a large ball of fire."[46] Nothing in this description suggested a portentous meaning to this event. Yet the community's response reflected the connection they made from it to divine protection.

> For this, Madame de la Trimoille [the abbess] ordered that every year, on the vigil of the Holy Sacrament, we would make a procession in which at the start, we would sing *Custod, nos Rex Israel*, which is in the great books of the choir, and a hymn to the holy sacrament, to give thanks to Our Lord for having preserved us from greater disaster and to protect the house from such strikes.[47]

In the chronicle, the use of prayer was strongly emphasized, perhaps in part to explain the origins of regular annual events in the community but also, it seems likely, as a reaffirmation of its efficacy amid contemporary theological discussions of the Catholic Reformation revival during which the chronicle was written.

The chronicle sought to provide the seventeenth-century Benedictine community with a sense of its renewed identity in the Counter Reformation world. This perspective was critical to the inclusion and interpretation of events suggesting natural disorder by the work's authors. At the time that this chronicle was being composed, rival religious communities for women were growing in Tours, not least the Ursuline community from which the celebrated Canadian missionary Marie de l'Incarnation had emerged.[48] Signalling its longevity and its triumph against the odds formed an important part of the abbey of Beaumont-lès-Tours story, even if only for its own community in relation to

46 "Il rompit aussi l'eschelle. Il blessa quelques religieuses et donna une tres grande frayeur, roulant par l'eglise comme une grosse boule de feu," ADIL H 794; Grandmaison, *Chronique*, 27–8.

47 "Pour ce sujet, madicte dame de la Trimoille ordonna que tous les ans, la vigile du sainct sacrement, l'on feroit une procession en laquelle, au commencement d'icelle, l'on chanteroit *Custod, nos Rex Israel*, qui est dans les grands livres du choeur, et un hymne du sainct sacrement, pour rendre grace a Nostre-Seigneur de nous avoir preservees de plus grand desastree, et pour conserver ceste maison de tels foudres," ADIL H 794; Grandmaison, *Chronique*, 28.

48 See discussion of Marie de l'Incarnation's early years in Natalie Zemon Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997).

these newer monastic alternatives.[49] The sixteenth century provided myriad opportunities to show survival in circumstances of adversity, including civil war, destruction of religious sites and objects, and the dispersal of the community to safer properties, but natural disasters also demonstrated the qualities of patient survival and trust in God's faith to protect them as well. Disorder had a place in the convent's story not directly because of its supernatural meanings, but because of how it reflected the convent's re-positioned identity.

Conclusion

This essay, examining two distinct sources composed by the same community, demonstrates how contextual and dynamic the interpretation of disasters was. Clearly, the world view of these women was fashioned by their participation in a particular monastic environment that shaped both their access to information and the ways they interpreted it. In addition, the contexts of genre and era mattered, as these specific events took on new meanings that justified their inclusion in the journal and/or the chronicle, and altered in significance as time passed.

Both the journal and chronicle bear witness to the nuns' knowledge, experience, and interpretation of disorder in the natural world over the later sixteenth century. Although the sources of information for such phenomena are not explicitly identified, they point to a combination of sources including personal communication, observation, letters, and published documents. In general the nuns' interpretive framework blended together the supernatural and the natural. Events that the nuns experienced themselves were not typically explicable in terms of a wider eschatological anxiety. When local disastrous natural occurrences were recorded in the journal, they did not generally seem to be part of an accumulation of 'signs' as a statement of faith, of the kind that the printed literature on the miracles of Brie seemed to encourage. These episodes were there instead to explain actions in the convent such as processions, prayers, the death of community members and even architectural changes. Significantly, though, the nuns' response to local as well as national events always involved reliance on divine intercession, to give thanks for their survival, to assist, and importantly, to protect against anything worse to come.

49 See Susan Broomhall, "The Convent as Missionary in Seventeenth-Century France," in *Gender, Race and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas*, (ed.) Nora Jaffary (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 57–66.

Marvels and wonders, it seems, did not generally happen locally. However, following the lead of pamphlet literature, the nuns did not discount the possibility that divine portents could be revealed elsewhere. Although they were educated elite women of their region, there is no sense of a sceptical interpretation of such events. Their religious identity as participants in a fervently Catholic community, one that followed and recorded the activities of the Guise intently, was foremost. Demonstrating belief in the prodigious events that print texts brought to their attention was one way in which these nuns could signal their allegiance to the ultra-Catholic Guise politics and participate in the religious wars from behind the walls of their convent.

When disordered nature made its appearance in the later chronicle, the religious and political circumstances as well as the convent's perspectives and identity had changed. As a consequence, prodigious signs that had played a palpable role in the community's imagining of its participation in the religious politics in the sixteenth century, and had thus been assiduously recorded by the journal authors, found no place in the convent's new narrative of its experiences at that period. Now the convent sought to identify itself as a venerable establishment that had withstood an onslaught of threats—financial, material, natural, political and spiritual—that had beset it during the previous century. In this context, the memory of unusual displays from the natural world affirmed the power of Tridentine Catholic spiritual activities from procession to prayer that had seen the community through these very real dangers, under God's protection.

References

Archival Sources

Archives départementales d'Indre-et-Loire, H 794, Chronique, 1510–1657.

Archives départementales d'Indre-et-Loire, H 796, Journal, 1577–1610.

Bibliothèque municipale de Tours, manuscrit 1332, Statutes approved by the Abbés de Chezal-Benoît, 1564.

Works Published after 1800

Baker, Joanne. 1997. Female Monasticism and Family Strategy: The Guises and Saint Pierre de Reims. *Sixteenth Century Journal* 28.4: 1091–108.

Broomhall, Susan. 2006. *Women and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

———. 2007. Convent Voices on Social and Familial Networks in Later Sixteenth-Century France. Special issue: *Early Modern Convent Voices: The World and the Cloister*, (ed.) Thomas M. Carr. *Studies in Early Modern France* 11: 59–74.

———. 2007. The Convent as Missionary in Seventeenth-Century France. In *Gender, Race and Religion in the Colonization of the Americas*, (ed.) Nora Jaffary, 57–66. Aldershot: Ashgate.

———. 2013. Disturbing Memories: Narrating Experiences and Emotions of Distressing Events in the French Wars of Religion. In *Memory Before Modernity. Memory Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Judith Pollmann, Erika Kuijpers, Johannes Müller, and Jasper van der Steen, 254–67. Leiden: Brill.

———. 2013. Reasons and Identities to Remember: Composing Personal Accounts of Religious Violence in Sixteenth-Century France. *French History* 27: 1–20.

———. Reader Response: What Sixteenth-Century French People Did with Printed News of the World. In *Disaster, Death and the Emotions in the Shadow of the Apocalypse, 1400–1700*, (eds.) Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming.

Céard, Jean. *La Nature et les prodiges*. Second edition. Geneva: Droz, 1996.

Crouzet, Denis. La représentation du temps à l'époque de la Ligue. *Revue historique* 270.2 (1983): 297–388.

———. 1990. *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion (v. 1525–v. 1610)*. 2 vols. Seyssel: Champ Vallon.

Daston, Lorraine J. and Katharine Park. 1998. *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750*. New York: Zone Books.

Davis, Natalie Zemon. 1997. *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives.* Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Fulton, Elaine and Penny Roberts. 2010. The Wrath of God: Explanations of Crisis and Natural Disaster in Pre-Modern Europe. In *History at the End of the World? History, Climate Change and the Possibility of Closure*, (eds.) Mark Levene, Rob Johnson and Penny Roberts, 67–79. Penrith: Humanities-Ebooks.

Grandmaison, Charles de. 1877. *Chronique de l'Abbaye de Beaumont-Lez-Tours*. Tours: Rouillé-Ladevèze.

Kerby, Anthony Paul. *Narrative and the Self*. 1991. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Lazard, Madeleine. 2005. Les processions blanches de la Ligue dans le *Registre-Journal* de Pierre de L'Estoile. In *L'Expression de l'inoubliable dans les mémoires d'Ancien Régime*, (ed.) Jean Garapon, 35–44. Nantes: C. Defaut.

Lehfeldt, Elizabeth A. 1999. Discipline, Vocation, and Patronage: Spanish Religious Women in a Tridentine Microclimate. *Sixteenth Century Journal* 30: 1009–30.

———. 2000. Convents as Litigants: Dowry and Inheritance Disputes in Early-Modern Spain. *Journal of Social History* 33.3: 645–64.

Lowe, Kate J. P. 2003. *Nuns' Chronicles and Convent Culture in Renaissance and Counter-Reformation Italy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Park, Katharine and Lorraine J. Daston. 1981. Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England. *Past and Present* 92: 20–54.

Racaut, Luc. 2002. *Hatred in Print: Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Rüsen, Jörn. 2011. Using History: The Struggle over Traumatic Experiences of the Past in Historical Culture. *Historein* 11: 14–18.

———. 2005. *History: Narration—Interpretation—Orientation.* New York: Berghahn.

Sawyer, Jeffrey K. 1990. *Printed Poison: Pamphlet Propaganda, Faction Politics, and the Public Sphere in Early Seventeenth-Century France*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Séguin, Jean-Pierre. 1964. *L'Information en France avant le périodique. 517 canards imprimés entre 1529 et 1631.* Paris: Editions Maisonneuve et Larose.

Spinks, Jennifer. 2012. Monsters and Heavenly Signs. In *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster*, (eds.) Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks, and Charles Zika, 47–61. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria.

———. 2009. *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany*. London: Pickering and Chatto.

———. 2013. Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-Century France: the *Histoires prodigieuses*, Confessional Identity, and the Wars of Religion. *Renaissance Studies* 27.1: 73–96.

Walker, Claire. 2003. *Gender and Politics in Early Modern Europe: English Convents in France and the Low Countries*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

CHAPTER 12

De Profundis: Linear Leviathans in the Lowlands

Larry Silver

> Can you draw out Leviathan with a fishhook?
> Lay hands on him; think of the battle; you will not do it again!
> No one is so fierce that he dares to stir him up.
> When he raises himself up the mighty are afraid;
> Behind him he leaves a shining wake; one would think the deep to be hoary.
> Upon earth there is not his like, a creature without fear.
>
> JOB 41: 1, 8, 10, 25, 32–33[1]

⁂

> At Zierikzee in Zeeland a whale has been stranded by a high tide and a gale of wind. It is much more than 100 fathoms long as this is. The fish cannot get off the land; the people would gladly see it gone, as they fear the great stink, for it is so large that they say it could not be cut in pieces and the blubber boiled down in half a year . . . Early on Monday we started again by ship and went to the Veere and Zierikzee and tried to get sight of the great fish, but the tide had carried him off again.[2]

Thus Albrecht Dürer recorded in the journal of his journey to the Low Countries early in December of 1520. As was his wont, the artist was attracted by the prospect of seeing a rare animal, in this case from the depths of the sea. His other drawings of unusual beasts include camels, elephants, and lions, as well as more modest sea creatures, such as crabs and lobsters, observed during his first trip to Venice in 1495.[3]

---

1 *Revised Standard Version* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952).

2 Trans. Martin Conway (1889). J.-A. Goris and G. Marlier, *Albrecht Dürer Diary of his Journey to the Netherlands 1520–1521* (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, 1971), 76.

3 Dagmar Eichberger, "*Naturalia* and *artefacta*: Dürer's Nature Drawings and Early Collecting," in *Dürer and his Culture*, (eds.) Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 13–37; Fritz Koreny, *Albrecht Dürer and the Animal and Plant Studies of the Renaissance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1988); Colin Eisler, *Dürer's Animals* (Washington: Smithsonian, 1991), esp. 124–33 for marine crustaceans; 251–75 for the more exotic animals,

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_014

While he could make no drawing of the stranded whale, a related colored drawing by Dürer, a *Walrus*, does record another large sea mammal.[4] That image stresses the animal's prominent pair of tusks and bristly, thick whiskers; its heavy head is seen like a portrait at three-quarter profile, emphasizing a single large eye as well as prominent neck folds. An inscription, seemingly by Dürer himself, records that "this stupid [*dosig*] animal, of which I have portrayed the head, was caught in the Netherlands sea and was twelve Brabant ells long with four feet." Such a description of both the character and size of the creature suggests comparison to the celebrated Dürer *Rhinoceros* broadsheet of 1515, which makes claims to being a true likeness, taken from life.[5] Yet Dürer-the-naturalist did not rest contented with his study sheet of such an unfamiliar beast; he soon adapted the curious visage of the walrus into the reclining foreground figure of a dragon, attribute of St. Margaret, in a loose composition sketch, possibly for an unexecuted print (1522; Bayonne Musée Bonnat).[6] Thus we observe how this important German master vacillates between two conflicting impulses in his early modern utilization of animal studies. While he prizes direct experience and close observation of creatures (even of plants) as resources, preserved on folios recorded in his personal modelbook, he certainly was willing to adapt those same images to represent either the monstrous or the diversity of life forms in his later art.

Inherited attitudes towards whales and other sea monsters extend back to classical authorities. Pliny's *Natural History* (Book IX, Chapter 3) briefly describes the *balaena*, or whale, "The Indian Sea breedeth the most and biggest animals; among whales (*balaenae*) are as large as four acres of land."[7] The

---

including the celebrated *Rhinoceros* woodcut (1515). *The Crab* is in Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen; *The Lobster* in Berlin, SMPK, Kupferstichkabinett.

4 John Rowlands, *The Age of Dürer and Holbein. German Drawings 1400–1550*, exh. cat. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 102, no. 74; inscribed 1521 along with the inscription by the artist. For the image see http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=720549&partId=1

5 Peter Parshall, "Imago Contrafacta: Images and Facts in the Northern Renaissance," *Art History* 16 (1993): 554–79, esp. 561–62. For Dürer's careful preliminary drawing of the *Rhinoceros* and its own inscription, Rowlands, ibid., 92–94, no. 65.

6 W. 855; the relationship was noted by Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 229, figs. 272, 287.

7 Pliny the Elder, *Pliny's Natural History in Thirty-Seven Books*, trans. Dr. Philemon Holland (1601 ed.), published for Wernerian Club (London: G. Barclay, 1847), 107, 112. http://archive.org/stream/plinysnaturalhisooplinrich#page/110/mode/2up/search/whale (accessed July 27, 2013). Chapter 6 describes "openings on their forehead . . . so as they swim on the surface of the water, they blow up aloft showers of rain."

medieval *Physiologus*, originally in Greek, embellishes this thin characterization with a much larger account (Chapter XXXI):

> Physiologus spoke of a certain whale in the sea called the Aspidoceleon that is exceedingly large like an island, heavier than sand, and is a figure of the devil. Ignorant sailors tie their ships to the beast as to an island and plant their anchors and stakes in it. They light their cooking fires on the whale, but, when he feels the heat, he urinates and plunges into the depths, sinking all the ships. You also, O man, if you fix and bind yourself to the hope of the devil, he will plunge you along with himself into hellfire. The whale has another nature: when he grows hungry he opens his mouth very wide and many a good fragrance comes out of his mouth. Tiny little fish, catching the scent, follow it and gather together in the mouth of that huge whale, who closes his mouth when it is full and swallows all those tiny little fish, by which is meant those small in faith.[8]

In similar fashion, a twelfth-century Latin *Bestiary* allegorizes the whale (*cetus*) still further in light of the story of Jonah, even as it also repeats many of the same legends, including the use of its sweet-smelling breath to entice smaller fishes:

> . . . It is called a whale because of the frightfulness of its body and because it was this animal which swallowed Jonah, and its belly was so great the people took it to be Hell. . . . This animal lifts its back out of the open sea above the watery waves, and then it anchors itself in the one place; and on its back . . . Sailing ships that happen to be going that way take it to be an island, and land on it. Then they make themselves a fireplace. But the Whale, feeling the hotness of the fire, suddenly plunges down into the depths of the deep, and pulls down the anchored ship with it into the profound. Now this is just the way in which unbelievers get paid out, I mean the people who are ignorant of the wiles of the Devil and place their hopes in him and in his works. They anchor themselves to him, and down they go into the fires of Hell.[9]

8 Anon., *Physiologus. A Medieval Book of Nature Lore*, trans. Michael Curley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 45–46.

9 Anon., *The Bestiary. A Book of Beasts*, (ed.) and trans. T. H. White (New York: Putnam's, 1960), 197–98.

But from Pliny the *Bestiary* adopts the more basic description: "The *Balenae* are animals of prodigious size, and they get their name from blowing or spouting waters. They puff the water higher than other beasts of the sea."[10] Thus the whale is seen as the earthly embodiment of the legendary Leviathan, sea monster and beast of chaos in the book of Job. Indeed, medieval manuscripts frequently extrapolated from the descriptions of Leviathan's fiery mouth (Job 41: 19–21) to depict Hell as a giant, flame-filled mouth of a monster.[11]

An image from an English *Bestiary*, c. 1230–40, illustrates this image.[12] It represents the whale as an oversized, scaly fish with trees attached to its back. A ship has also made landfall there, and its crew has lit a fire and attempts to cook with a large black pot atop the fish. In its mouth smaller fishes are visible, doubtless lured by its perfumed breath. For the *Hortus deliciarum*, a late twelfth-century allegory by Herrad of Landsberg, the manuscript illustration, using an interpretation stemming from Church Father Gregory the Great,[13] shows the Leviathan being snared on the "hook of divinity" (*aculeus divinitatis*).[14] Here the monster is expressly identified with Satan, deceived—and thus caught like a fish on a line—by Christ's human flesh and humility on the cross.

---

10 Ibid.

11 "Out of his mouth go flaming torches; sparks of fire leap forth./Out of his nostrils comes forth smoke, as from a boiling pot and burning rushes./ His breath kindles coals, and a flame comes forth from his mouth." (Job 41:19–21). Emile Mâle, *The Gothic Image. Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century* (New York: Harper, 1958), 379–80; Gary D. Schmidt, *The Iconography of the Mouth of Hell: Eighth-Century Britain to the Fifteenth Century* (Selingsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1995), including discussion of stage sets, 165–78; see also Michael Camille, "Mouths and Meanings: Towards an Anti-Iconography of Medieval Art," in *Iconography at the Crossroads*, (ed.) Brendan Cassidy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 45–57.

12 London, British Library, Harley MS 4751, fol. 69; color illustration in Raymond van Uytven, *De Papegaai van de Paus. Mens en Dier in de Middeleeuwen* (Louvain: Davidsfonds, 2003), 27; see also Chet Van Duzer, *Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps* (London: British Library, 2013), 48–49, fig. 28.

13 Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, Patriologia Latina LXXVI, col. 680. Later reiterated by Honorius of Autun: "Leviathan the monster who swims in the sea of the world, is Satan. God threw the line into the sea. The cord of the line is the human descent of Christ, the bait is His divinity. Attracted by the smell of flesh Leviathan tries to seize it but the ook tears his jaws." Quoted by Mâle, *Gothic Image*, 380, no. 4.

14 Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus deliciarum*, (eds.) Rosalie Green, Michael Evans, Christine Bischoff, and Michael Curschmann (London: Warburg Institute, 1979), cat. no. 101, fol. 84 recto; Fiona Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights: Reform and Renaissance for Women in the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 119–20, pl. 8.

By the era of printing in the early sixteenth century a wide variety of sea monsters populated the watery margins of early maps. Most influential of these is the 1539 *Carta marina*, a woodcut map on nine sheets of 'northern lands' by Olaus Magnus (Olaf Mansson, archbishop of Uppsala), which in turn prompted a memorable map of Iceland by Sebastian Münster in his 1544 *Cosmographia* (Basel; Fig. 12.1), designed for woodcut by Hans Rudolf Manuel Deutsch, which truly popularized the earlier animal figures of Olaus Magnus.[15] Then Abraham Ortelius took up the same Iceland map (1585) for insertion into his pioneering atlas, *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (Antwerp).[16] In the latter two images, a key on the map is accompanied by descriptions of these varied sea monsters. A later publication by Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (Rome, 1555) provides the fullest account of these sea-monsters in Book XXI.[17]

At bottom the width of the image is occupied by a fish as large as a mountain (A), which can overturn ships unless frightened away by the sound of trumpets, or they may play with empty barrels thrown in the water. This legend,

15 For the *Carta Marina* see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Carta_Marina.jpeg. William Mead, "Scandinavian Renaissance Cartography," in *The History of Cartography III.2 Cartography in the European Renaissance*, (ed.) David Woodward (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 1786–88; Elfriede Knauer, *Die Carta Marina des Olaus Magnus von 1539* (Göttingen: Gratia, 1981), esp. for Münster, 48–50, no. 137, fig. 13. The unknown *Formschneider*, or carver of the *Cosmographia* woodblock, left his initials on the image: "M-F." Knauer also notes, 50–54, fig. 14, the adoption of Olaus Magnus's sea monsters in the *Africa* map of Giacomo Gastaldi, ca. 1564. Magnus published an illustrated history of Scandinavia, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus* (Rome: Johannes Maria de Viottis, 1555; and see below), whose last three books were dedicated to fish and sea monsters as well as insects. Since this article was written, now see Chet Van Duzer, *Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps* (London: British Library, 2013), esp. 81–87 on Olaus, 100–03 for Gastaldi; Joseph Nigg, *Sea Monsters: A Voyage around the World's Most Beguiling Map* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), focusing on the Olaus map.

16 For the Ortelius map, Van Duzer, *Sea Monsters*, 108–111; Jan Werner, *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598). Aartsvader van onze Atlas* (Amsterdam: Canaletto, 1998), 65–66, no. 42; in the collaborative production of Ortelius's atlas, this map is ascribed to Gudbrandur Thorlaksson of Iceland. The links are traced in Joy Kenseth (ed.), *The Age of the Marvelous*, exh. cat. (Hanover, NH: Hood Museum, 1991), 106, 300–3, nos. 79–80. Münster's map is a double folio (852 verso-853 recto).

17 Translated as Olaus Magnus, *Description of the Northern Peoples Rome 1555*, Peter Foote (ed.), trans. Peter Fisher and Humphrey Higgens (London: Hakluyt Society, 1998), vol. III, 1081–56. This edition serves as the source of the translations below.

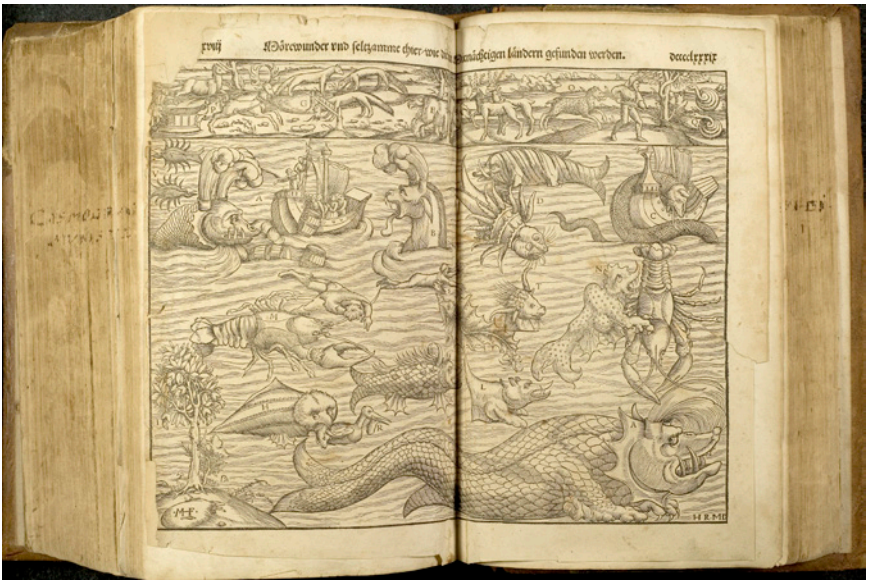

FIGURE 12.1 *Hans Rudolf Manuel Deutsch* (*design by*), *Map of Iceland, in Sebastian Münster,* Cosmographei (*Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1550*), *woodcut.*
PHOTO: UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, HEIDELBERG, A 219 B FOLIO RES.

visible at the upper left of the woodcut,[18] reappears in Netherlandish art in a late sixteenth-century painting, *Storm at Sea* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum), probably the other most famous image of whales from the sixteenth century. Formerly attributed to Pieter Bruegel the Elder, the picture is now attributed to a Flemish follower from the next generation, possibly Joos de Momper.[19] It suggests how this marine sport ultimately allows clever humans to escape from the threats of the sea and seek the brightly-lit distant haven by

18 Singled out in Van Duzer, *Sea Monsters*, 38, fig. 3. Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus*, XXI, Chapter 7, 1089, citing trumpets and casks as remedies.

19 Klaus Demus, *Flämische Malerei von Eyck bis Bruegel* (Vienna: Herold, 1981), 128–36; Lawrence Goedde, *Tempest and Shipwreck in Dutch and Flemish Art* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1989), 70–76. For the "tale of the tub," see ibid., 75, no. 77.

discarding worldly goods; however, later centuries focused instead on the folly of the beast in chasing mere trifles.[20]

A very curious 'whale' at (B) in the top center shows another giant, fanged creature, a dragon expelling two spumes like a conventional cetacean, but with an extended neck and mane like a sea horse.[21] This is the other whale-like giant of the Indian Ocean, called by Olaus Magnus "spouter" (*pister* or *phiset* on the map) and mentioned by Pliny (Book IX, chapter 3); it can sink even a large ship by sucking in water and then blowing it out again in clouds through holes in its forehead.[22] Long sea serpents also threaten (C) to coil around ships at sea.[23] Another creature (K) shows terrible, boar-like tusks, identifying him as a sea-pig, which Olaus claims was found and displayed in Antwerp in 1537.[24] One monster, a *ziphius* (H) with its owl-like face, is blamed for devouring seals.[25] The dog-like face at (L) is mentioned as having a high hump on its back and called a "spring whale" by the Norwegians. The giant lobster (M), holding a swimmer in its claws, is called a crab in the Münster text but clearly is an octopus according to Olaus.[26] Attacked in turn at right (N) that same lobster falls prey to a creature resembling a rhinoceros with a sharp-pointed nose and a sharp-edged back.[27] Olaus cites that smaller, attacking enemy as a "grampus" (Norwegian *springhval*), that is the 'leaper,' a creature resembling an upturned boat, armed with ferocious teeth, which it uses as brigantines do their prows."[28] The Münster text concludes by noting that:

---

20 See Jonathan Swift, who argues in *The Tale of the Tub* (1704), that the Ship of State was threatened by a new Leviathan, specifically the eponymous philosophy of Thomas Hobbes.

21 Van Duzer, *Sea Monsters*, shows sea horses and an aquatic unicorn, 93, figs. 7–8.

22 Magnus, *Description of the Northern Peoples;* XXI, Chapter 6, 1087–88, citing Strabo (Book XV) and Pliny (Book IX, Chapter 3).

23 Magnus, *Description of the Northern Peoples*; XXI, Chapter 43, 1128–29, claiming 200 foot length and twenty feet thickness. One such serpent portends an evil omen for Norway, like a comet.

24 Van Duzer, *Sea Monsters*, 85, fig. 72. Olaus Magnus, *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus*, XXI, Chapter 27, 1110.

25 Magnus, *Description of the Northern Peoples*, XXI, Chapter 14, 1096–97, there spelled *xiphias*.

26 Magnus, *Description of the Northern Peoples*, XXI, Chapter 34, 1118–19, noting its eight feet.

27 Van Duzer, *Sea Monsters*, 85–86, fig. 73, notes that it is called an octopus by Olanus in his 1555 *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus.*

28 Magnus, *Description of the Northern Peoples*, XXI, Chapter 9, 1091.

> Many other types and marvelous forms of animals, fishes, and birds are found in the northern regions, about which a great book could be produced. For the torrid zone in Africa has its unique and marvelous animals which can scarcely live outside the heat of that region, so in turn the creator gave the cold northern regions its own animals which cannot bear the heat of the sun.[29]

As the text of Münster makes clear, reports of such monstrous sea creatures reinforced belief in their existence. Similar reports still inform the assembled discussion *On Monsters and Marvels* (1573) by French surgeon Ambroise Paré.[30] He studies nature through its irregularities and unique occurrences, the wondrous, but increasingly Paré moves away from the religious framing of such marvels.[31] As he synthesizes various publications, especially in French, from his own century, Paré itemizes the roster of sea monsters, often with woodcut images drawn directly from Olaus Magnus and Sebastian Münster, citing them as reliable observer authorities along with his contemporary, French explorer and royal cosmographer André Thevet.[32] Paré reports mermen, flying fish, and other strange marine beasts, but he reserves his longest discussion for the whale, which he terms a "monster" in a description evocative of Dürer's broadsheet description of the *Rhinoceros*:

> it is the largest monster-fish that is found in the sea, most often thirty-six cubits long, eight wide; the opening of the mouth is eighteen feet, without having any teeth; but instead on the sides of the jaws it has excrescences [baleen] as of black horn, which end in hairs similar to a swine's bristles . . . the snout is short, and in the middle of the forehead is a conduit through which it draws in air and casts out a great deal of water—like a cloud—with which it can fill skiffs and other small vessels, and overturn them into the sea. When it is sated, it bellows and cries so loud that one can hear it for a French league; it has two large wings at its

29 Sebastian Münster, "Monstra Marina & Terrestria," *Cosmographia*; translation from Nigg, *Sea Monsters*, 14.

30 Ambroise Paré, *On Monsters and Marvels*, (ed.) and trans. Janis L. Pallister (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), 107–136, esp. 130–34 on whales; *Age of the Marvelous*, 117–18, 330, no. 109.

31 On the basic background to this historical moment and the shift from religious explanations to early modern science see Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature* (New York: Zone, 1998).

32 For the sea-pig, Paré, *On Monsters and Marvels*, 114–15, fig. 52, orig. fol. 164. The Thevet source is his *Cosmographie universelle* (1575).

> sides, with which it swims and hides its young when they are afraid, and on its back it has none at all; its tail is similar to that of a Dolphin, and agitating it, it moves the water so greatly that it can overturn a skiff; it is covered with tough, black hide.[33]

Paré even speaks on his own behalf as a witness, when he mentions how in winter some of the creatures have been observed and sometimes caught with harpoons near Biarritz.[34] He claims that he personally owns a prized stool made out of whalebone.

This kind of credible eyewitness testimony is reinforced by Paré's inclusion of a woodcut of a whale captured in 1577 from the Scheldt River near Antwerp and Vlissingen. His description of the animal is meticulously measured:

> it was of a dark-blue color; it had on its head a nostril through which it cast water; it had in all a length of fifty-eight feet and a height of sixteen feet; the tail was fourteen feet wide; from the eye as far as to the front of the snout there was an expanse of sixteen feet. The lower jaw was six feet long, on each side of which were twenty-five teeth. But on top it had as many holes in which said lower teeth could be hid . . . The biggest of these teeth was six inches long, the entirety was wondrous and frightening to contemplate, due to the vastness, largeness, and thickness of such an animal.[35]

The woodcut itself, however, is freely adapted from Olaus Magnus by way of Conrad Gesner (1560), originally depicting the processing of a captured whale on the Faroe Islands.[36]

A much more prosaic and practical description of whales was compiled in 1585 as *The Whale Book* by Adriaen Coenen (1514–1587), the son of a Dutch

---

33 Paré, *On Monsters and Marvels*, 131, orig. fol. 183.

34 A long tradition of whale-hunting by Basque seafarers focused on the Bay of Biscay. The Atlantic baleen whales they chiefly hunted were later named by American whalers as "right" whales, i.e. the correct ones to hunt. Simon Winchester, *Atlantic* (New York: Harper, 2010), 285–86.

35 Paré, *On Monsters and Marvels*, 134, fig. 65, orig. fol. 183.

36 Conrad Gessner, *Historia animalium* (Zurich: Christoph Froschauer, 1551–58). Sachiko Kusukawa, "The Sources of Gessner's Pictures for the *Historia animalium*," *Annals of Science* 67: 3 (2010): 303–28; on Gessner's publishing of plants, Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book of Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), esp. 138–77.

fisherman rather than a scholar or courtier.[37] Its text descriptions appeared accompanied by amateur watercolours, accurate enough to permit identification of species by modern naturalists. Most of the creatures in this book, both fishes and whales as well as marine invertebrates, were local, experienced directly by Coenen from the North Sea and Atlantic Ocean. Some exotic and distant others, such as hippos, are also included.[38] Devoting one page to "sea dragons" and including a poem to Leviathan, he claims that they fight with whales.[39] Coenen still shows some mythic monsters, such as mermen, sirens, "sea bishops" or "sea monks," but he expresses skepticism, noting that he knows them only from hearsay but has never seen them, unlike most of his specimens.[40] He also expressly mentions several beached whales.[41] He ends the first of his two books with this pious declaration: "Good viewer and reader [note the order; images remain primary]: here you have seen many strange and big, wondrous fish. Herein can one see the wondrous works of God."[42]

One final compendium, written by Elizabethan naturalist Edward Topsell (1607–1608), can serve as an index to the understanding of whales and other sea monsters (Tritons, Nereides, and Sea Elephants) at the start of the seventeenth century. Basing himself on Pliny as well as on the great Swiss "father of zoology," Konrad Gesner (1516–1565), Topsell provides a summation of received wisdom on this giant rarity, in this case still largely dependent on Pliny rather than direct observation:

---

37 *The Whale Book: Whales and other Marine Animals as Described by Adriaen Coenen in 1585*, (eds.) Florike Egmond and Peter Mason (London: Reaktion, 2003). Coenen is best known for his *Fish Book* (The Hague, Royal Library, ca. 1577/79). The *Whale Book* is in Antwerp, Royal Zoological Society (MS 30.021), 125 folios (*Walvisboeck*).

38 *The Whale Book*, 142–43, citing Pierre Belon as the source of this report on "the horse of the Nile."

39 *The Whale Book*, 128–29: "Heed what I say./ Leviathan I shall not portray/ For after looking in all the books,/ That would not be the right way./ Him I may not picture/ Otherwise than in the scriptures."

40 For example, *The Whale Book*, 120–27. See also 76–79, acknowledging Olaus as a source, and on 86–87: "You can't represent these fish as strangely as Olaus describes them. Olaus writes very many wonderful things about these fish, but they are not credible." Although of humble origins, his other sources, according to Egmond and Mason, introduction, xi, include: Guillaume Rondelet, Pierre Belon, Olaus Magnus, Sebastian Münster, and Conrad Gesner both for their woodcut illustrations and their texts.

41 *The Whale Book*, 8–11, 110–14. The beached whales include: a fin whale at Egmond (1547), Westerheij as well as near Antwerp (1577; the latter already noted by Paré), and near his native Scheveningen (1581, where Coenen also met the leader of the contemporary Dutch Revolt, William of Orange).

42 Ibid.

> The biggest and most monstrous creature in the Indish Ocean are the whales called Pristis and Balaena . . . Orcae, other monstrous fishes . . . and deadly enemies they bee unto the foresaid Whales. And verily, if I should pourtrait them, I can resemble them to nothing els but a mightie masse and lumpe of flesh without all fashion, armed with most terrible, sharpe, and cutting teeth. . . .[43]

In contrast to its earlier models, the woodcuts of Olaus Magnus and Sebastian Münster, Abraham Ortelius's engraved map of Iceland utilized the greater precision and detail of intaglio as a medium to convey its information about both geography and marine fauna. In similar fashion, the woodcut of the captured whale utilized by Paré would soon be replaced at the end of the sixteenth century for documentation of the same subject by the highly skilled manual dexterity of professional engravers in Holland, led by and trained by Dürer's true successor as a printmaker, Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617).

On February 3, 1598, more than two full generations after Dürer's missed opportunity in Zeeland, another beached whale, a sperm whale, turned up near the village of Berkhey, near Katwijk. So Goltzius made his way to Berkhey and produced an ink drawing, tinted like Dürer's *Walrus* and monogrammed HG (Haarlem, Teylers Museum).[44] Not only for scale but also because such an event drew large crowds, the artist has included a variety of spectators of all classes busy inspecting the great sperm whale, including several who are clambering atop the creature to make careful measurements like those reported by Paré. This image, however, operates as much as a genre subject as a document for science, since it even shows background tents and small, shoreline sailing vessels as well as the physical surroundings of the beach with background dunes. Individuals have already begun the process of breaking down the ani-

---

43 Cited and translated in M. St. Clare Byrne, (ed.) and trans., *The Elizabethan Zoo* (Boston: Nonpareil, 1979), 59–61. For Gesner and Topsell, Kenseth, *Age of the Marvelous*, 114–15, 326–27, nos. 104–05; regarding the "sea-boar" in Gesner, which included a woodcut after Olaus Magnus, the Swiss declared, "Let us trust to the evidence of the artist's illustrations; for we have taken great care to have them all drawn from the northern map, but it appears that he often made them from the narrations of mariners, not according to life." Translation and quote from *Elizabethan Zoo*, 168.

44 E.K.J. Reznicek, *Hendrick Goltzius Zeichnungen* (Utrecht: Haentjens Dekker and Gumbert, 1961), 442–43, no. 419; Huigen Leeflang and Ger Luijten, eds, *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 2003), 182–84, no. 65. Klaus Barthelmess, "The Sperm Whales *Physeter macrocephalus* at Berckhey in 1598 and on the Springersplaat in 1606—A Discovery in Early Iconography," *Lutra. Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Zoogdierkunde en Zoogdierbescherming* 32 (1989): 185–92.

mal; one man atop the beast has begun to take an axe to its hide.[45] Modern biologists have pointed out inaccuracies in the rendered anatomy of the creature especially its pectoral fin, represented as if it were an ear flap, so they have suggested that earlier images rather than on-site inspection lay behind the artist's representation.[46] In all likelihood, this carefully composed and executed horizontal drawing was produced back in the studio after sketches made on site, leading to potential misconceptions.

Goltzius had already published an engraving of a previous event, when a smaller cetacean, probably a pilot whale, was stranded at Zandvoort (November 21, 1594; Fig. 12.2).[47] In this rendering two men measure the creature, while a third man observes; in the background a long line of figures approaches along the shoreline, framed by dunes.

Very quickly the Berkhey drawing of Goltzius was reproduced in an engraving by his stepson and protégé, Jacob Matham, newly returned from a trip to Italy.[48] Its text by Latinist Theodorus Schrevelius provides the pride in its documentation but also sounds a cautionary, emotional note about its possible message as a divine portent:

---

45 Sperm whales provided particular prizes: blubber for the finest oil as well as spermaceti in head cavities for wax uses, and ambergris in the intestine used for perfumes. Most startlingly, a whale penis could be refitted with a hole for the head into what came to be known as an "Inverness cape." Winchester, *Atlantic*, 288–89.

46 Werner Timm, "Der gestrandete Wal, eine motiv-kundliche Studie," Forschungen und Berichte Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (1961): 76–93; Bert Sliggers and A. A. Wertheim (eds.), *"Op het strand gesmeten." Vijf eeuwen potvisstrandingen aan de Nederlandse kunst*, exh. cat. (Zutphen: Walburg, 1992), esp. 52–54; Klaus Barthelmess and Joachim Münzing, *Monstrum Horrendum. Wale und Waldarstellungen in der Druckgraphik des 16. Jahrhunderts und ihr motivkundlicher Einfluss* (Hamburg: Kabel, 1991), 100–01, no. 15.

47 Barthelmess and Münzing, *Monstrum horrendum*, 33–35, 92–93, no. 13, who make the firm identification of the creature as a pilot whale; Susan Dackerman, (ed.), *Prints and the Pursuit of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe* exh. cat. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Art Museums, 2011), 230–31, no. 51, emphasizes the importance of measurement; Linda Stone-Ferrier, *Dutch Prints of Daily Life*, exh. cat. (Lawrence, KS: Spencer Art Museum, 1983), 189–91, no. 54. The engraving after a Goltzius design was executed in the artist's workshop, probably by Jan Saenredam. Latin text by Cornelis Schonaeus: "The blue sea brings forth powerful creatures, one of which you see here, noble reader; a bulky monster, found on the Batavian shore, which the artist's hand of Goltzius gives you to see." Further to the text, see note 49, below.

48 Leeflang and Luiten, *Goltzius*, 182–84, no. 65, with translations of texts; Susan Dackerman, (ed.), *Pursuit of Knowledge*, 216–17, no. 46; Thea Vignau-Wilberg, *Das Land am Meer. Holländische Landschaft im 17. Jahrhundert*, exh. cat. (Munich: Hirmer, 1993), 82–85, no. 27.

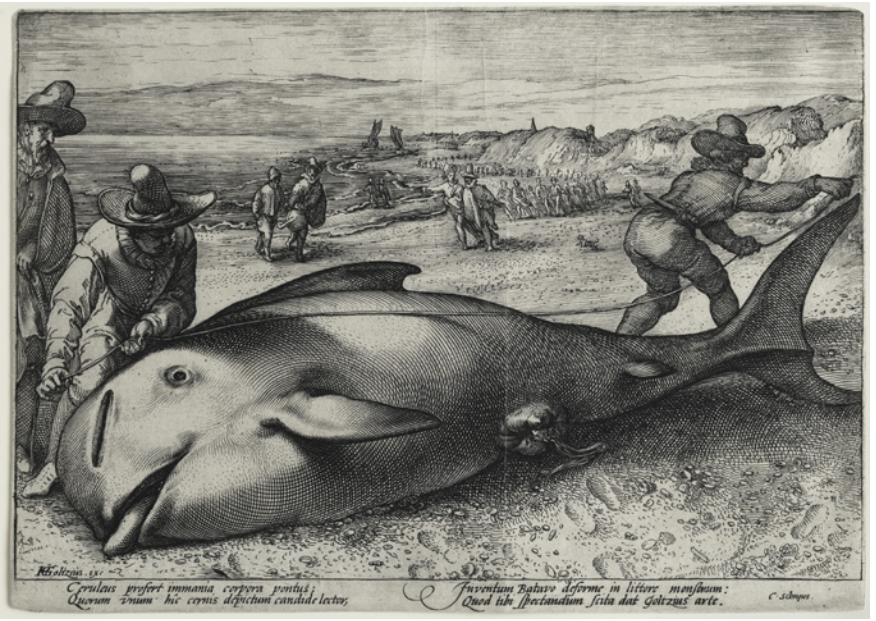
Ceruleus profert immania corpora pontus;
Quorum unum hic cernis depictum candide lector;
Juventum Batavo deforme in littore monstrum:
Quod tibi spectandum sistit dant Goltzius arte.

FIGURE 12.2 *Jan Saenredam (?) after Hendrick Goltzius, Stranded whale at Zandvoort, engraving, 1594. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Light-Outerbridge Collection, Richard Norton Memorial Fund.*
PHOTO: IMAGING DEPARTMENT. © PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS OF HARVARD COLLEGE.

> A large whale, thrown up out of the blue sea (gods, let it not be a bad omen!), washed up on the beach near Katwijk. What a terror of the deep Ocean is a whale, when it is driven by the wind and its own power on to the shore of the land and lies captive on the dry sand. We commit this creature to paper and we make it famous so that the people can talk about it.[49]

An accompanying Dutch text by Karel van Mander, Goltzius's close associate in Haarlem, sounds a different, more overtly religious note along with its precision of descriptive science:

> The cruel salt waves, hellishly churned up by stormy skies, driven by stiff winds, have washed up such a fish near Catwijck to show us God's wondrous works out of the depths of the sea, measuring Eleven inches and six

49 Leeflang and Luijten, *Goltzius*, 182.

> and fifty feet long, and three and thirty thick, on the third day of February sixteen hundred less two . . . With a wondering heart many an eye beheld him, as many tongues and mouths must praise him whose highest worth alone transcends all praise.[50]

Even these texts reveal a tendency to allegorize the event or at least to link it to more transcendent meanings.[51] Already in a letter (1522; no. 550) to Paulus Speratus Luther had described an earlier whale found in Holland as a divine portent aimed against his opponents:

> But God has given them an omen of death, if perchance they may come to themselves and repent; for a sea-monster has been cast ashore at Haarlem. It is called a whale, and is seventy feet long and thirty-five wide. By all the precedents of antiquity this prodigy is a sure sign of God's wrath. The Lord have mercy on them and us.[52]

For the most part whales were still considered sea monsters on maps and in such descriptions. Their rare appearances were still usually interpreted as omens or portents, divine signs to be interpreted, usually as warnings. Of course, they were still regarded as fish rather than mammals until the later classification system of Linnaeus in the eighteenth century.[53]

---

50 Ibid.

51 H. van de Waal, *Drie Eeuwen Vaderlandsche Geschied-uitbeelding 1500–1800* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1952), 19–20, citing such Dürer images as the engraved *Monstrous Sow of Landser* (1496) as well as other misbirths, such as the Freiburg "monk's calf," allegorized for anti-papal propaganda by Luther. For the definitive study of this phenomenon see Jennifer Spinks, *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009). For the Dutch context of whales as omens, Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 130–44.

52 *Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters. Vol. II. 1521–1530* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1918), 125, no. 550.

53 On current evolutionary understanding of whales as mammals, related to hippos and ungulates, Richard Dawkins, *The Ancestor's Tale* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004), 196–202. Carl von Linné, or Linnaeus (1707–1778) set out the rules and catalogues of all known plant and animal genera through his *Systema naturae* (12 editions, 1737–64). His classification system—in Latin—was hierarchical, rising from species and genera to orders, classes, and kingdoms. See Tore Frängsmyr, (ed.), *Linnaeus: The Man and his Work* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983); Lisbet Koerner, *Linnaeus: Nature and Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

When in 1577 a whale was again stranded in the contested borderland mouth of the river Scheldt near Antwerp, it was interpreted as a sign that the animal, sent from Spain during the nascent Dutch Revolt, was miraculously stopped from doing harm to the Netherlands.[54] In similar fashion, various reports of the 1598 Berkhey whale by the learned Hugo Grotius debated between whether the animal had been driven to the beach by natural causes, such as storms, or else where it should be interpreted as an omen, either a portent of disaster or else a more positive sign of Dutch triumph over their enemies.[55]

This kind of interpretive overlay informs both the image and the text of the most ambitious reworking of Goltzius's 1598 model from Berkhey. His protégé Jan Saenredam's engraving, *Beached Whale at Beverwijk* (1602; Fig. 12.3), records an event of the previous year.[56] In this instance, the entire foreground is populated with diverse, well-dressed figures of various ages, including children playing and an artist sketching in the lower left as well as background wagons and horses before the dunes. Prominent in the center foreground, holding a handkerchief to his nose against the stench of the animal, stands Count Ernst Casimir of Nassau-Dietz, nephew of the stadholder Prince Maurice of Nassau, with his retinue. Indeed, the entire print is dedicated to the count ("valiant hero and most vigilant protector of the Netherlands' liberty") and decorated at top center with his arms.

This exalted dedication called forth a longer, learned Latin poem by Schrevelius, which sets the tone for the interpretation of the print about both beast and event:

> The southwest wind, in a mighty whirl, has driven onto the Batavian beach a terrifying sea monster whose gaping jaws strike fear into the entire race of sea creatures, whose tail sweeps the waves and cleaves the waters . . . It looks in vain at Neptune's waters. And, lying on its right side, it breaks in two under its awesome weight, and the whole heavens resound with the terrifying roar . . . O You, who by the nod of Your head shock the foaming temples of the sea, which harbor such monsters, and

54 Barthelmess and Münzing, *Monstrum horrendum*, 22–28.

55 Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, 130, 133.

56 Clifford Ackley, *Printmaking in the Age of Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1980), 44–46, no. 24; Stone-Ferrier, *Daily Life*, 192–94, no. 55; Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, 138–40; Barthelmess and Münzing, *Monstrum horrendum*, 45–47, 112–15, no. 21; Dackerman, *Pursuit of Knowledge*, 48–49, no. 3; Nadine Orenstein in *Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art 1580–1620*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1993), 532–33, no. 208.

FIGURE 12.3 *Jan Saenredam, Beached Whale at Beverwijk, engraving, 1602.* PHOTO: RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, RP-P-OB-4635.

who encircle all lands in fate, Great Father, whatever is foretold by this sea monster./ Be it something joyful for the fatherland and the Dutch people or be it menacing: we ask, trembling, for forgiveness and peace. For if the fore-knowing prophecies of the seers contain anything, it is the evidence of Your wrath and of impending disaster./ How many disasters and bloodbaths have followed this ominous monster on the beach of the Katten (for this much the portents do hold)? Equally, we took this for the omen, terrifying for unfortunate mortals, that Phoebus's countenance was obscured by rust,/ The day stained by mists and the moon darkened, and likewise the changing climates of the tormented world. That voracious Time shall never rob memory of this wondrous omen, it is safely entrusted to the eternal almanacs.[57]

57 Translation Orenstein, *Dawn of Golden Age*, 532. The lower center cartouche holds more scientifically precise information about the event and the beast: "A very accurate drawing, in accordance with the geometrical proportions of limbs and muscles of the ominous sea monster that was cast onto the south side of Beverwij, beach in Holland when the year 1600 was coming to its end, on 20 December, and which measured 60 feet in length, 14 in height, 36 in girth, had a tail of 14 feet and a mouth opening of 12."

As the text suggests, numerous celestial events, "disasters and bloodbaths," also taken as portents to be interpreted astrologically in almanacs, occurred close in time to the beached sperm whale at Beverwijk. The whale appeared on 19 December 1601; a solar eclipse followed on 24 December, then an earthquake on 2 January and a complete lunar eclipse on 4 June. So it was hardly surprising that the beachside event was taken seriously and negatively during the stressful time of the Dutch war of independence. Vignettes in the cartouche of the frame at top center show the solar eclipse at right and lunar eclipse at left with the earthquake (*terra motus*) in between.

The allegorical reading is made explicit by a pair of personifications that also appear in the upper reaches of the engraving. In the upper left corner Father Time looks down and observes the event. His significance is underscored by the words on the open book held by his neighboring putto at the top right center: "History, which bears witness to the passing of the ages, sheds light upon reality, gives life to recollection and guidance to human existence, and brings tidings of ancient days."[58] Additionally, Fame, a flying figure above the dunes at the right horizon, blows her trumpet to spread the news of the event and record it as History.

This overview of sea monster imagery on maps and of actual whales in engraved documentaries reinforces the conclusions reached earlier by Charles Zika about "reporting the news and reading the signs," specifically concerning witchcraft depictions in both word and image, or both, in the case of broadsheets.[59] He correctly compares them to reports of "comets, falling stars, [other] monsters, wondrous births, floods and famine," all "signs to be read, displays of God's anger, punishments for sin, warnings for the future"—even more so when the phenomena under consideration could explicitly be connected to evil or satanic forces. Whales, with lingering biblical associations of Leviathan or God's punishment to Jonah, as well as with monstrous size and alien features, clearly played into this same early modern predilection for the wondrous or marvelous as a portent or omen.[60] Significantly, representations of the story of Jonah remained popular in Netherlandish marine art throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, serving alongside other biblical

58 Orenstein, *Dawn of Golden Age*, 532.

59 Charles Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 179–209.

60 For the parallel case of celestial wonders, Larry Silver, "Nature and Nature's God: Immanence in the Landscape Cosmos of Albrecht Altdorfer," *Art Bulletin* 91 (1999): 194–214; Eric Jorink, *Reading the Book of Nature in the Dutch Golden Age, 1575–1715*, trans. Peter Mason (Leiden: Brill, 2010), esp. 110–179.

shipwreck subjects as the prototype of deliverance of the Lord's anointed from evil, embodied by the whale.[61]

So the description of whales in terms of their size and shape is overlaid with the same kind of powerful interpretive framework. Yet a more dispassionate reporting, *naer het leven* (*ad vivum*; after life) also emerges from these later Dutch beachside sightings, and for these the favored presentation used is the same broadsheet of an isolated visual specimen with description already employed a century earlier by Dürer for his *Rhinoceros* (1515).[62] Placing his figure against a blank background, Hendrick Hondius produced just such a broadsheet about a sperm whale, based on the 1598 Berkhey beaching; he showed the animal's body bloating due to gases after extended time on the beach. But his image still resembled both the Goltzius drawing and the Matham engraving made from the same event (uncredited as a source but with the same misunderstood pectoral fin).[63] Accompanied with texts in French, Dutch, and (terser) Latin, the leaf describes the event and itemizes the whale's measurements. While in all three languages the animal is called a monster, its depiction is claimed to be a "true likeness" (*vray pourtraict; rechte Conterfeytsel; veram & genuinam effigiem*). From this kind of proto-scientific focus on appearance and dimensions, the sperm whale entered into zoological publications with illustrations. Another of Gesner's successors, Carolus Clusius, included the whale in his *Exoticorum libri decem* (Ten Books of Exotics; Leiden, 1605), with a woodcut based on the Matham image and the claim that his book is the first that pictures the whale as observed.[64] Such assertions accord with the emerging descriptive science in Dutch publications of the early seventeenth century,

---

61 Goedde, *Tempest and Shipwreck*, 48, 75–79, 82–83; Schama, *Embarrassment of Riches*, 141–43; J. Richard Judson, "Martin de Vos' Representations of 'Jonah Cast over the Side,'" *Miscellanea I.Q. van Regteren Altena* (Amsterdam: Scheltema and Holkema, 1969), 82–87.

62 Parshall, "Imago contrafacta"; Dackerman, *Pursuit of Knowledge*, 164–83; for the concept of *naer het leven*, Claudia Swan, *Art, Science, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Holland. Jacques de Gheyn II (1565–1629)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 10–12, 36–51.

63 Kenseth, *Age of the Marvelous*, 331–32, no. 110; Barthelmess and Münzing, *Monstrum horrendum*, 94–99, no. 14; a unique copy survives (Cambridge, MA: MIT Museum, Hart Nautical Collection). In addition, this is the only engraving by Hondius that bears the name of another publisher, Hendrick Haestens, a Leiden bookmaker. See Nadine Orenstein, *Hendrick Hondius and the Business of Prints* (Rotterdam: Sound and Vision, 1996), 122, fig. 78.

64 Dackerman, *Pursuit of Knowledge*, 216, 219, no. 46; for more on Clusius and his publication of exotic animals, Peter Mason, *Before Disenchantment: Images of Exotic Animals and Plants in the Early Modern World* (London: Reaktion, 2009).

which included the meticulous naturalism of Jacques de Gheyn II, for example his studies of the blowfish and puffer fish, images that also found their way into the illustrated morphologies of Clusius.[65]

While only whalebones could find their way as *naturalia* into contemporary cabinets of curiosities, such blowfish and even walruses could be found there, usually as stuffed specimens hanging from ceilings. Imagery of such collection installations also appeared around the turn of the seventeenth century.[66]

For the following generation, however, picturesque aspects of stranded whales, featuring the anecdotal details of visiting observers, emerge more prominently to overshadow the description and detail of Goltzius, Matham, and Saenredam. Correspondingly, the medium employed is etching rather than engraving, sketchier and faster in execution and smaller in scale. Exemplifying this tendency, a 1617 *Whale Stranded between Scheveningen and Katwijk* was produced by Haarlem painter-etcher Willem Buytewech (1591/92–1624).[67] It takes a lower viewpoint and presents the animal as a much bulkier, foreshortened mass, surrounded and given scale by a variety of figures, patricians as well as fishermen, mounted, standing, even seated on the beach. All of the figures display Buytewech's love of costume as the contrasting measure of social identity and class.

Even the inscription is briefer and scratchily handwritten on the etching rather than offering the calligraphic elegance of the Haarlem engravings.[68] Within a thin decorative frame border with delicate sea motifs and around a scallop-shaped cartouche, that inscription also confines itself to itemizing the

---

65 Swan, *Art, Science, and Witchcraft*, 99–104.

66 Kenseth, " 'A World of Wonders in One Closet Shut,' " *Age of the Marvelous*, 80–101, 234–42, nos. 14–19; Arthur MacGregor, *Curiosity and Enlightenment: Collectors and Collections form the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 11–69, figs. 13, 17–18, 20, 23; for the Netherlands in particular, *De wereld binnen handbereik. Nederlandse kunst- en rariteiten-verzamelingen, 1585–1735*, (eds.) Ellinoor Bergvelt and Renée Kistemaker, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: Waanders, 1992).

67 Ackley, *Age of Rembrandt*, 96–98, no. 56, noting that a "free, impressionistic" ink sketch with wash provided the preliminary composition of the print; Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, *Williem Buytewech* (Amsterdam: Hertzberger, 1959), 29–30. The print was issued and credited to book publisher Broer Jansz in The Hague. A painting of this event was also produced by Buytewech's Haarlem associate, Esias van de Velde (1617; Sharon, MA, Kendall Whaling Museum); Barthelmass and Münzing, *Monstrum horrendum*, 186–87, no. 50.

68 Amy Namowitz Worthen, "Calligraphic Inscriptions on Dutch Mannerist Prints," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 42–43 (1991–92), 261–306.

date and location at left and the measurements of the whale at right.[69] Little of the ominous fear, Latin verses, or any larger allegory of interpretation has been retained in this modest image, which does suggest that the artist as observer recorded what he perceived on site.

Far from the imaginary creatures of the deep pictured in medieval bestiaries or projected onto the open seas of early maps, actual beached whales by now have become pictorial spectacles. While they increasingly provided curious objects for scientific measurement and careful visual description, they also became subjects for genre imagery of varying social classes and special occasions in Dutch life and art.

References

Archival Sources

Antwerp, Royal Zoological Society, MS 30.021.

London, British Library, Harley MS 4751.

Works Published before 1800

Gessner, Conrad. 1551–58. *Historia animalium*. Zurich: Christoph Froschauer.

Magnus, Olaus. 1555. *Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus*. Rome: Johannes Maria de Viottis.

Münster, Sebastian. 1544. *Cosmographia*. Basel: Henrichum Petri.

Works Published after 1800

Ackley, Clifford. 1980. *Printmaking in the Age of Rembrandt*. Exh. cat. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts.

Barthelmess, Klaus and Joachim Münzing. 1991. *Monstrum Horrendum: Wale und Waldarstellungen in der Druckgraphik des 16. Jahrhunderts und ihr motivkundlicher Einfluss*. Hamburg: Kabel.

Barthelmess, Klaus. 1989. The Sperm Whales *Physeter macrocephalus* at Berckhey in 1598 and on the Springersplaat in 1606—A Discovery in Early Iconography. *Lutra. Tijdschrift van de Vereniging voor Zoogdierkunde en Zoogdierbescherming* 32: 185–92.

Bergvelt, Ellinoor and Renée Kistemaker (eds.). 1992. *De wereld binnen handbereik. Nederlandse kunst- en rariteiten-verzamelingen, 1585–1735*. Exh. cat. Amsterdam: Waanders.

69 Ackley, *Age of Rembrandt*, 98: "The fish was stranded between Scheveningen and Katwijk on January 21, 1617; it is 52 feet long and 36 thick, the tail being 5 feet wide."

Camille, Michael. 1993. Mouths and Meanings: Towards and Anti-Iconography of Medieval Art. In *Iconography at the Crossroads*, (ed.) Brendan Cassidy, 45–57. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Dackerman, Susan (ed.). 2011. *Prints and the Pursuit of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*. Exh. cat. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Art Museums.

Daston, Lorraine and Katherine Park. 1998. *Wonders and the Order of Nature*. New York: Zone.

Dawkins, Richard. 2004. *The Ancestor's Tale*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Dawn of the Golden Age. Northern Netherlandish Art 1580–1620. 1993. Exh. cat. Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum.

Demus, Klaus. 1981. *Flämische Malerei von Eyck bis Bruegel.*Vienna: Herold.

Eichberger, Dagmar. 1998. *Naturalia* and *artefacta*: Dürer's Nature Drawings and Early Collecting. In *Dürer and his Culture*, (eds.) Dagmar Eichberger and Charles Zika, 13–27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eisler, Colin. 1991. *Dürer's Animals*. Washington: Smithsonian.

Goedde, Lawrence. 1989. *Tempest and Shipwreck in Dutch and Flemish Art*. University Park, PA: Penn State University Press.

Goris, J. A. and George Marlier. 1971. *Albrecht Dürer Diary of his Journey to the Netherlands 1520–1521*. Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society.

Griffiths, Fiona. 2007. *The Garden of Delights: Reform and Renaissance for Women in the Twelfth Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Haverkamp-Begemann, Egbert. 1959. *Williem Buytewech*. Amsterdam: Hertzberger.

Herrad of Hohenbourg. 1979. *Hortus deliciarum*. (Eds.) Rosalie Green, Michael Evans, Christine Bischoff and Michael Curschmann. London: Warburg Institute.

Jorink, Eric. 2010. *Reading the Book of Nature in the Dutch Golden Age, 1575–1715*. Trans. Peter Mason. Leiden: Brill.

Judson, Richard. 1969. Martin de Vos' Representations of 'Jonah Cast over the Side.' In *Miscellanea I.Q. van Regteren Altena*, 82–87. Amsterdam: Scheltema and Holkema.

Kenseth, Joy (ed). 1991. *The Age of the Marvelous*. Exh. cat. Hanover, NH: Hood Museum.

Knauer, Elfriede. 1981. *Die Carta Marina des Olaus Magnus von 1539*. Göttingen: Gratia.

Koerner, Lisbet. 1999. *Linnaeus: Nature and Nation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Koreny, Fritz. 1988. *Albrecht Dürer and the Animal and Plant Studies of the Renaissance*. Boston: Little Brown.

Kusukawa, Sachiko. 2010. The Sources of Gessner's Pictures for the *Historia animalium. Annals of Science* 67(3): 303–28.

———. 2012. *Picturing the Book of Nature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Leeflang, Huigen and Ger Luijten (eds.). 2003. *Hendrick Goltzius (1558–1617): Drawings, Prints, and Paintings*. Exh. cat. Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum.

Linnaeus. The Man and his Work. 1983. (Ed.) Tore Frängsmyr. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Luther's Correspondence and Other Contemporary Letters. 1918. *Vol. II. 1521–1530*. Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society.

MacGregor, Arthur. 2007. *Curiosity and Enlightenment: Collectors and Collections form the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Magnus, Olaus. 1998. *Description of the Northern Peoples. Rome 1555*. (Ed.) Peter Foote, trans. Peter Fisher and Humphrey Higgens. London: Hakluyt Society, vol. III.

Mâle, Emile. 1958. *The Gothic Image. Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century*. New York: Harper.

Mason, Peter. 2009. *Before Disenchantment: Images of Exotic Animals and Plants in the Early Modern World*. London: Reaktion.

Mead, William. 2007. Scandinavian Renaissance Cartography. In *The History of Cartography III.2 Cartography in the European Renaissance*, (ed.) David Woodward, 1786–88. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Nigg, Joseph. 2013. *Sea Monsters: A Voyage around the World's Most Beguiling Map*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Orenstein, Nadine. 1996. *Hendrick Hondius and the Business of Prints*. Rotterdam: Sound and Vision.

Panofsky, Erwin. 1955. *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Paré, Ambroise. 1982. *On Monsters and Marvels*. (Ed.) and trans. Janis L. Pallister. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Parshall, Peter. 1993. Imago Contrafacta: Images and Facts in the Northern Renaissance. *Art History* 16: 554–79.

Physiologus: A Medieval Book of Nature Lore. 2009. Transl. Michael Curley. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pliny the Elder. 1847. *Pliny's Natural History in Thirty-Seven Books*. Trans. Dr. Philemon Holland (1601 ed.), published for Wernerian Club. London: G. Barclay.

Reznicek, Emil K. J. 1961. *Hendrick Goltzius Zeichnungen*. Utrecht: Haentjens Dekker and Gumbert.

Rowlands, John. 1988. *The Age of Dürer and Holbein. German Drawings 1400–1550*. Exh. cat. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schama, Simon. 1987. *The Embarrassment of Riches*. New York: Knopf.

Schmidt, Gary D. 1995. *The Iconography of the Mouth of Hell: Eighth-Century Britain to the Fifteenth Century*. Selingsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press.

Silver, Larry. 1999. Nature and Nature's God: Immanence in the Landscape Cosmos of Albrecht Altdorfer. *Art Bulletin* 91: 194–214.

Sliggers, Bert and A. A. Wertheim (eds.). 1992. *Op het strand gesmeten. Vijf eeuwen potvisstrandingen aan de Nederlandse kunst*. Exh. cat. Zutphen: Walburg.

Spinks, Jennifer. 2009. *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany.* London: Pickering and Chatto.

Stone-Ferrier, Linda. 1983. *Dutch Prints of Daily Life*. Exh. cat. Lawrence, KS: Spencer Art Museum.

Swan, Claudia. 2005. *Art, Science, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Holland. Jacques de Gheyn II (1565–1629)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts. 1960. (Ed.) and trans. Terence Hanbury White. New York: Putnam's.

The Elizabethan Zoo. 1979. (Ed.) and trans. M. St. Clare Byrne. 1926, reprint Boston: Nonpareil.

The Whale Book: Whales and other Marine Animals as described by Adriaen Coenen in 1585. 2003. (Eds.) Florike Egmond and Peter Mason. London: Reaktion.

Timm, Werner. 1961. Der gestrandete Wal, eine motiv-kundliche Studie. *Forschungen und Berichte Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, 76–93.

Van Duzer, Chet. 2013. *Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps*. London: British Library.

Van Uytven, Raymond. 2003. *De Papegaai van de Paus. Mens en Dier in de Middeleeuwen*. Louvain: Davidsfonds.

Vignau-Wilberg, Thea. 1993. *Das Land am Meer. Holländische Landschaft im 17. Jahrhundert*: Exh. cat. Munich: Hirmer.

Waal, Henri van de. 1952. *Drie Eeuwen Vaderlandsche Geschied-uitbeelding 1500–1800*. The Hague: Nijhoff.

Werner, Jan. 1998. *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598): Aartsvader van onze Atlas*. Amsterdam: Canaletto.

Winchester, Simon. 2010. *Atlantic*. New York: Harper.

Worthen, Amy Namowitz. 1991–92. Calligraphic Inscriptions on Dutch Mannerist Prints. *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 42–43: 261–306.

Zika, Charles. 2007. *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe*. London and New York: Routledge.

CHAPTER 13

The Ferocious Dragon and the Docile Elephant: The Unleashing of Sin in Rembrandt's *Garden of Eden*

Shelley Perlove

Rembrandt's etching of *Adam and Eve* of 1638 (Fig. 13.1), the artist's only interpretation of this subject from Genesis (3:1–6), is unconventional in its portrayal of the first couple as weak, unattractive, and debased; but the most fascinating inhabitants of his Garden of Eden are the ferocious, huge dragon that looms over Adam and Eve, and the docile elephant resting all alone in the distant landscape.[1]

Rembrandt may have been motivated to take up this subject in 1638, since he acquired prints by Albrecht Dürer and Lucas van Leyden in that year from the Gommer Spranger auction in Amsterdam.[2] Both sixteenth-century artists portrayed the temptation of Adam and Eve on multiple occasions, and Rembrandt's version was created in dialogue with their works. Rembrandt's etching of 1638 was also strongly influenced by the Dutch *Statenbijbel* and the writings of John Calvin, Simon Episcopius, and Hugo Grotius. The study of this print in conjunction with prevailing contemporary religious debates sheds additional insight on this work of art.

The *Statenbijbel*, the official Dutch translation of the Bible from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts, appeared in 1637, with copious notes and paraphrases strongly influenced by John Calvin and St. Paul, and to a lesser extent, the Roman-Jewish historian Flavius Josephus.[3] The translation project had its origins within conflicts challenging Orthodox Calvinism and its fundamental

1 The springboard for this essay is the large study of Rembrandt's religious works, Shelley Perlove and Larry Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009).

2 On the Gommer Spranger auction of February 1638, Roelof van Gelder and Jaap van der Veen, "A Collector's Cabinet in the Breestraat: Rembrandt as a Lover of Art and Curiosities," in *Rembrandt's Treasures*, (ed.) Bob van den Boogert (Zwolle: Waanders, 1999), 38.

3 *Biblia* (Statenbijbel)*, dat is de gantfche H. Schrifture, vervattende alle de Canonijcke Boecken des Ouden en des Nieuwen Testaments, Door laft der Hoogh-Mog: Heeren Staten Generael van de Vereenighde Nederlanden en volgens het Befluyt van de Synode Nationael, gehouden tot Dordrecht in de Iaren 1618 en 1619* . . . (Leiden: Paulus Aertsz van Ravensteyn, 1637).

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_015

FIGURE 13.1 *Rembrandt*, Adam and Eve, *etching, 1638.*
PHOTO: RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, RP-P-1961-992.

doctrine of pre-destination at the Synod of Dort (1618/1619). Unhappy with Dutch Bibles translated from Lutheran Bibles, Orthodox Calvinists hosting the Synod called upon the States General to produce a translation from 'original' texts, on the model of the King James Bible of 1611. The Dutch translation project began in 1626, with manuscripts in circulation until its completion in 1635 and publication in Leiden, Rembrandt's home town. Generally speaking, Rembrandt's narratives from the Hebrew Bible invoke ideas expressed in the *Statenbijbel* notes, which closely follow the writings of St. Paul and Calvin.

More than any other artist of his own century, Rembrandt engaged directly with themes from Genesis and other chapters of the Old Testament, as many scholars have noted.[4] It is important to stress that his interpretations of these narratives were deeply rooted in Christian, rather than Jewish interpretations.[5] Rembrandt followed a traditional Christology which viewed the personages and events of the Old Testament in relation to the future Christian redeemer. As conveyed in the Prologue to Genesis in the *Statenbijbel*, the Fall of Adam and Eve was a most devastating first event whose dire consequences could only be mediated by the coming of Christ:

> Here we find the Original rise of Sin, of Death, and of all manner of Miseries, poured out like a mighty Torrent upon all mankind, through the disobedience of Adam and Eve in eating the forbidden fruit. Yet therewithal you have likewise here the first Promise of Grace, touching man's redemption by the seed of the Woman, which God of his mercy would give in due time, for to bruise the Serpent's head . . . Here we find the first rudiments and fundamentals of sound Doctrine, of the true Religion and

4 Shelley Perlove, "Awaiting the Messiah: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Late Work of Rembrandt," *Bulletin of the University of Michigan Museum* 11 (1994–95): 85–113; Shelley Perlove, "An Irenic Vision of Utopia: Rembrandt's *Triumph of Mordecai* and the New Jerusalem," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56 (1993): 38–60 and more recently, Michael Zell, *Reframing Rembrandt: Jews and the Christian Image in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). More generally see the work of Christian Tümpel (ed.), *Het Oude Testament in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: Joods Historisch Museum, 1991); Christian Tümpel, "Rembrandt's Old Testament Etchings," in *Patriarchs, Angels, and Prophets: The Old Testament in Netherlandish Printmaking from Lucas van Leyden to Rembrandt*, exh. cat., (ed.) Peter van der Coelen (Amsterdam: Museum het Rembrandthuis, 1996), 31–37; also Christian Tümpel and Astrid Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bible aus*, exh. cat. (Berlin: Kupferstichkabinett der Staaltichen Museen Preubischer Kulturbesitz, 1970).

5 Perlove and Silver, *Rembrandt's Faith*, 7–15, 70–159.

> worship of God, introduced together with the promise aforesaid; and consequently the history of the True Church . . .[6]

The same Prologue of the *Statenbijbel* claims that after the Deluge the main aim of Genesis was to "show forth the re-establishing of the Church," which sprang from the small company of Noah's household and was preserved a long time in the generation of Sem, but fell at length into idolatry. The remnants of Sem's posterity, however, were preserved in Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God maintained this chosen generation

> in the true doctrine of his pure worship, governing them by his word and Spirit, protecting them against their enemies, and exercising them with many troubles and afflictions, wherein nevertheless he comforted them ever and anon by his Oracles and Apparitions and helped them out of their thralls by singular deliverances.[7]

The Prologue also emphasizes that the Lord did all of this for his chosen people, despite their human frailties, "even in the chiefest of these holy Patriarchs, which God graciously forgave for the Messias sake, whom they embraced by upright faith with true repentance." In view of the Prologue to the *Statenbijbel*, it is not surprising that Rembrandt emphasizes the trials, tribulations, and the human shortcomings of the Hebrews, who are nonetheless comforted and preserved by God for the sake of the future Christian Messiah. The Prologue to Genesis in the *Statenbijbel* also sets the stage for Rembrandt's interpretation of the Fall of Adam and Eve. It presents this moment as the most devastating of events, whose dire consequences could only be remediated by Christ's redemption of humanity.

The subject of the Fall of humankind embodies fundamental theological presumptions regarding the nature, consequences, and remedies of original sin and Rembrandt's etched version of the subject invokes an eminently Christian perspective. The need for a savior to redeem humankind is already suggested in the print through the desperation of the first couple, as they are about to commit the first sin, whose tragic effects will be endured by all humankind until the coming of Christ.

---

6 The spelling, capitalization, and translation here and in all quotes for this article derive from an English translation of 1637 of the Dutch Statenbijbel. See *The Dutch Annotations upon the whole Bible, or all the Holy Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament . . ., translated by Theodore Haak* (London: Henry Hills, 1657), unpaginated.

7 Ibid., unpaginated.

In Genesis 3:1–6, God warns Adam and Eve against eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, upon the threat of death. After the serpent convinces Eve, then Adam, to disobey God's interdiction, the first couple suffers bitter consequences: both are cast out of Paradise; Adam and his male descendants are condemned to labor in misery; Eve's feminine successors must submit to their husbands and endure the pains of child birth; but the worst curse of all is death, falling upon the entirety of humanity.

Adam and Eve stand beside the Tree of Knowledge on a hilltop in Rembrandt's print. The landscape of Eden is lush and a distant view reveals its only occupant, a huge elephant. Adam extends his *left* hand to take the rotting apple with its dark blemish from the *left* hand of his wife. Their future act of sin is already intimated by the use of their sinister left hands to grasp the rotten fruit. The clear, open sky behind them is invaded by the fierce head of a whiskered dragon that leans out of the Tree of Knowledge to aggressively confront Adam. The usual 'serpent' of the story is here replaced by a grotesque hybrid monster with huge clawed feet, hairy legs, bat-like wings, a heavy, rat-like tail, and piercing eyes. Rembrandt's portrayal of the serpent as a dragon is uncommon for this subject and does not resemble previous depictions of the serpent in the Garden of Eden: Dürer's famous engraved *Adam and Eve* of 1504 features a sly and deceptively innocent-looking snake (Fig. 13.2); and most of Lucas van Leyden's serpents in Eden are large-headed snakes that play a much less dominant role than the dragon of Rembrandt's invention (Fig. 13.3). Rembrandt's footed reptile has not yet been condemned by God to slither upon the ground like a snake, but its forbidding appearance also carries deeper significance.

As noted by Christian Tümpel, Rembrandt's ferocious dragon resembles the hybrid, lizard-like devil slouched over the archway of hell in Dürer's print from the *Engraved Passion, The Descent into Hell* of 1512 (Fig. 13.4).[8] The event portrayed by Dürer, known as the Harrowing of Hell, traditionally shows Christ descending into hell to rescue righteous men and women imprisoned there, including Adam and Eve. Just below the entrance arch in Dürer's engraving Adam and Eve wait patiently, as Jesus bends over to pull an aged man from the pit of hell. The resemblance to the devil in Dürer's print implies that Rembrandt's dragon as Satan will also be defeated by Christ, when the redeemer enters hell to rescue Adam and Eve and others from the fiery pit, just before his Ascension to heaven.

Rembrandt's portrayal of the snake as a dragon also carries a link with Revelation 12:9. The passage relates that the "great Dragon" that the angels of St. Michael cast out of heaven was none other than the "Old Serpent" called

8 Tümpel and Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bibel aus*, no. 1.

FIGURE 13.2 *Albrecht Dürer*, Adam and Eve, *engraving, 1504.*
PHOTO: RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, RP-P-OB-1155.

FIGURE 13.3 *Lucas van Leyden*, Adam and Eve, *from the series* History of Adam and Eve, *engraving, 1529.*
PHOTO: GRAPHISCHE SAMMLUNG ETH ZÜRICH. INV. D 464–467.

FIGURE 13.4 *Albrecht Dürer*, Descent into Hell, *from the* Engraved Passion, *engraving, 1512.* PHOTO: RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, RP-P-OB-1172.

"Devil and Satan, the seducer of the whole world." The *Statenbijbel* on this text quotes 2 Corinthians 11:3, which essentially associates the dragon of Revelation with the serpent in paradise.[9] This connection was reiterated by the Dutch minister Simon Episcopius.[10] The Dutch jurist and writer Hugo Grotius invoked the "Old Dragon" of the Garden of Eden in his Passion play of 1618 where Christ says:

> . . . Why stay I with triumphant feet to tread upon the infernal Serpents poisonous Head, and break the old Dragons jaws? The sin of our First Parents must be cleansed with a shower of blood, rained from my wounds: my death appease, and cure the venom of that dire Disease.[11]

Calvin, who identified the 'dragon' as Satan, the instigator of the Fall, blamed Eve for giving the demon an 'opening' to come near her to "exalt himself petulantly and with proud confidence against God." Her "impure look . . ., infected with the poison of concupiscence, was both the message and witness of an impure heart. Now depravity was diffused through all parts of her soul as well as her body."[12] Calvin's description is wholly consonant with Rembrandt's characterization of Eve. Her 'depravity' is suggested in the print by her ominous look and disgraced body. No other visual image of Eve conveys her shame so powerfully. The possession of her fleshly body by Satan is conveyed in this work by her placement within a dark shadow. Her engorged vulva, visible in the darkness beneath her belly, bears testimony to her lustful arousal and enthrallment to sin.

Close to Eve, the dragon-as-Satan aggressively leans out of the tree to witness Adam's first sin. The demon seems to have become the woman's associate. The Flavian Jewish historian Josephus placed heavy blame upon Eve, who persuaded Adam with the same enticements the serpent offered her, and therefore brought ruin upon her husband.[13] The fearsome dragon in the

---

9 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear lest in any wise as the Serpent beguiled Eve by its subtlety so your senses should be corrupted to turn away from the simplicity which is in Christ."

10 Simon Episcopius also mentioned Ephesians 2:2 within this context which says that humankind formerly walked with Satan and followed the sins of the flesh, see Simon Episcopius, *The Confession or declaration of the ministers or pastors which in the United Provinces are called Remonstrants, concerning the chief points of Christian Religion* (London: Francis Smith, 1676), 100.

11 George Sandys, *Annotations to "Christ's Passion. A Tragedie"* (London: John Legatt, 1640), 1.

12 John Calvin, *Commentaries on The First Book of Moses called Genesis*, trans. John King (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), 149–50.

13 Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, Book 1, Chapter 1, Section 4.

etching dangles another apple from the side of his gruesome mouth, as if to foretell his future ascendancy over humankind through the unrelenting perpetuation of sin. Lucas van Leyden's engraving of 1529, *The Fall of Man* from the series, *The History of Adam and Eve*, also shows the serpent with another apple in its mouth (Fig. 13.3).[14] This imagery clearly implies there will be many more apples for humankind to eat in the future. In Rembrandt's etching yet another apple dangles from the over-arching branch of the Tree of Knowledge.

Calvin's description of Adam's fall seems to accord with Rembrandt's etching in other ways as well. The Swiss reformer explained that Adam, who was not present when Eve fell, soon joined her at the Tree of Knowledge and may have taken the fruit because he was captivated by her "allurements."[15] Eve's seduction of Adam was frequently evoked in art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Rembrandt emphasizes the eroticism of the subject more in his drawings than in the print. This is apparent in the two sketches related to the print, one in a private collection, and the other in the Prentenkabinet of Leiden University.[16] The pen and ink drawing attributed to Rembrandt in a private collection presents Eve as an alluring young woman who directly confronts a youthful, curly-haired Adam (Fig. 13.5).[17] Eve sits on a high bank, her body seductively disposed between Adam's outspread thighs. She emphatically thrusts her arm towards her ingenuous mate to hand him the fruit. Adam's active, but subservient position in the drawing attributed to Rembrandt

14 Clifford Ackley notes that Lucas van Leyden, whose prints Rembrandt collected, portrayed the serpent with another apple in his mouth (Hollstein 3, 8, 9, and 10), See Clifford S. Ackley, *Rembrandt's Journey. Painter, Draftsman, Etcher*, exh. cat. (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts Publications, 2003), 166.

15 Calvin, *Genesis*, 152.

16 On the sexuality of the figures consult Holm Bevers, Peter Schatborn, and Barbara Welzel, *Rembrandt: the Master and His Workshop* II*, Drawings and Etchings*, exh. cat., trans. Elizabeth Clegg et al. and (ed.) Sally Salvesen (Berlin: Gemäldegalerie, SMPK, 1991–92), 195–97, no. 11; *Patriarchs, Angels and Prophets*, (ed.) Peter van der Coelen, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: Museum Het Rembrandthuis, 1996), 66–67, no. 2. There are numerous earlier examples of alluring, seductive Eves, especially among prints, including the following: Albrecht Dürer's engraving of 1504, *Adam and* Eve; Dürer's painting, *Adam and Eve*, 1507, The Prado, Madrid; Hans Baldung Grien's painting, *Eve, the Serpent, and Death*, c. 1520–25, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Lucas van Leyden's engraving, *Fall of Man*, 1529; Titian's painting of *Adam and Eve*, c. 1550, Prado, Madrid; Jacopo Tintoretto's painting of *Adam and Eve*, c. 1550, Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia.

17 For a discussion of the two drawings consult Christopher White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher. A Study of the Artist at Work*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 39, 41.

FIGURE 13.5 *Attributed to Rembrandt,* Adam and Eve, *ink drawing.*
PRIVATE COLLECTION.

may derive from Lucas van Leyden's engraving of 1529 (Fig. 13.3).[18] Adam in this drawing, however, is more excited and conflicted; he raises his hands in alarm, but stares at the proffered apple with abject fascination. Rembrandt's Leiden sketch (Fig. 13.6) shows the first couple in an intimate, highly eroticized relationship. Eve is portrayed as an attractive, confident, older woman, who reaches for Adam's groin, while offering him an apple with her other hand.[19] Eve's actions in this case could not be more sexually explicit. In the little sketch that appears in the corner of the same sheet, she forcibly presses his hand over the fruit, despite his gesture of protestation. Eve's aggressive behavior in this

18 A painting of The Fall of Adam and Eve by Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem (1622, Hamburg, Kunsthalle) shows Eve standing and Adam seated. For the range of presentations of Adam and Eve as well as general discussion of the fraught imagery of the female nude in Lucas van Leyden engravings, Larry Silver and Susan Smith, "Carnal Knowledge: The Late Engravings of Lucas van Leyden," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 29 (1978): 239–98.

19 White claims Eve is pushing Adam away with her hand, see White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher*, 41. A similar gesture appears a century earlier in the drawings and paintings of Adam and Eve by Jan Gossaert; see Larry Silver, "*Figure nude, historie e poesie*: Jan Gossaert and the Renaissance Nude in the Netherlands," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 37 (1986): 1–40.

FIGURE 13.6 *Rembrandt*, Adam and Eve, *ink drawing, 1638.*
PHOTO: LEIDEN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, PK-T-AW-1097.

drawing inspired Christopher White to wryly suggest it might be entitled, "the rape of Adam."[20]

While Eve dominates her husband in the sketches, neither spouse prevails over the other in Rembrandt's etching. Significantly, the terrain and Adam's posture in the print imply he was originally on higher ground, but came down (lowered himself?) to be with his wife and to participate in the sin. The guilt falls upon both Adam and Eve who are wholly absorbed in one another.[21] Calvin, however, particularly focused upon Adam, who should have known

20 White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher*, 41. The sexual aggressiveness of Eve in these images recalls Jan Gossaert's *Adam and Eve*, especially as portrayed in a drawn copy in Frankfurt (Städelsches Kunstinstitut), which shows Eve suggestively hovering over a semi-recumbent Adam to offer him the fruit.

21 As in Jan Gossaert's more eroticized Providence drawing (Rhode Island School of Design) of the same subject. Illustrated in Silver, "*Figure nude, historie e poesie*," 4.

better: "His sin proceeded from an evil conscience, since a judgment had been given to him by which he could distinguish between vices and virtues."[22]

In the etching Adam's furrowed brow, disheveled hair, and darkened features evoke his agitation as he reaches for the apple. He is fully cognizant of the dire consequences of this fateful act. Adam points towards heaven, with his hand near his ear, as if remembering the sound of God's voice issuing the prohibition.[23] Adam nonetheless yields to the sensual temptations of sight, touch, and taste. This is only one example of many in which Rembrandt conveys the importance of hearing (the Word) over all other senses, including sight.[24]

The elephant in Rembrandt's formulation may also be related to Calvin, who lamented that Adam and Eve might have learned an important lesson from the animals that were created by God on the same day they received life: "As often as they beheld any one of the animals which were in the world, they ought to have been reminded both of the supreme authority and of the singular goodness of God."[25] Rembrandt, however, departs from tradition in only including one animal, the elephant, in his Eden. Leonard Slatkes suggested that the artist's elephant in this print was based on Rembrandt's black chalk sketches of an actual beast that visited the Netherlands one year before the date of this etching; Slatkes also cited varied ancient sources that view the elephant as a symbol of virtue and piety, particularly chastity, but Rembrandt's meaning contradicts this view.[26]

---

22 Man was created in God's image and therefore had knowledge of the "sovereign good." See Calvin, *Genesis*, 118. The Remonstrant Simon Episcopius claimed that man was endowed with a rational and immortal spirit and was made in God's image, Episcopius, *The Confession*, 101.

23 Nicola Courtright pointed out to Christopher White the similarity between this gesture in Rembrandt's etching and the early Rubens painting, *The Temptation of Man* in Antwerp, the Rubenshuis, White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher*, note 37, 264.

24 Interestingly enough, Rembrandt drew a tree trunk in black chalk on an impression of State I in the British Museum, London. See Holm Bevers' catalogue entry for Rembrandt's *Adam and Eve* in Bevers, Schatborn, and Welzel, *Rembrandt: the Master and His Works*, 196. The artist may have considered the possibility of adding a dead Tree of Life in the second state. Countless works of art show the Tree of Life to the left of the Tree of Knowledge in portrayals of the Fall of Adam and Eve, including: Jan Gossaert's painting, *Adam and Eve*, [not dated and surely late, ca. 1525], Collection of Her Majesty the Queen, London; Titian's painting of *Adam and Eve*, c. 1550, The Prado, Madrid. In Lucas van Leyden's engraving, *The Fall of Man*, there are two trees to the left, one which is dead, and the other living.

25 Calvin, *Genesis*, 139.

26 Rembrandt's three elephant sketches of 1637 are: Benesch 457, 458, and 459. Medieval bestiaries particularly focus upon the chastity of the elephant, recounting that the innate

Another relevant and compelling text on the elephant, however, has not been previously discussed. Hermann Frey's *Therobiblia. Biblisch Thierbuch* ("Animal Bible" or "Biblical Animal Book") of 1595, which is principally based on Hebrew Scripture. This text references Job 40:10–18 in describing the elephant.[27] In these passages God tells Job:

> Behold now, Behemoth [the elephant] that I have made beside thee . . . Behold now his power is in his loins and his might in the navel of his belly . . . He is a chief piece of the ways of God. He that made him hath joined his sword unto him.

The text also describes the benign docility of this powerful beast, which lies down "under shadowing trees in the lurking-place of the reed and the mire," where the "brook willows encompass him." Both Frey and the annotations to the *Statenbijbel* identify the Behemoth of Job as an elephant that demonstrates God's power in taming savagery. As explained in the *Statenbijbel*, the Lord described the brute power of this animal to demonstrate divine power. Frey quotes from many authors, such as the German reformer, Andreas Osiander, and the early church father, St. Ambrose, who considered the elephant restrained by God to be none other than Satan.[28] Frey and the *Statenbijbel* were not the only sources that associated the elephant with Job 40:10–18. An anonymous German woodcut of 1651 portrays an elephant holding a "sword" with his trunk and implies a connection with Job 40:14: "He that made him hath joined his sword unto him."[29]

The foregoing discussions of Job 40:10–18 are pertinent to Adam and Eve, who might have looked to the example of the animals in understanding the ways of God, as Calvin claimed. The brutish power of Rembrandt's elephant (an image of Satan) presumably had been calmed by God, and like the

---

modesty of the animal obliges it to have sex only by backing up towards each other while facing away.

27 Hermann Heinrich Frey, *Therobiblia: Biblisch Thier- Vogel-und Fischbuch* (Leipzig: Johann Beyers, 1595). Reprint, Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1978), 101b. Christian Tümpel cited this source in his discussion of the peacocks in Rembrandt's painting of 1640, *The Visitation*, in the Detroit Institute of Arts (Bredius 562). See Christian Tümpel (with contributions by Astrid Tümpel), *Rembrandt: All Paintings in Colour*, rev. and (ed.) Ivan Gaskell, 2nd ed. (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1993), 243–44, 399; cat. no. 60.

28 Frey, *Therobiblia*, 101a–102a.

29 The woodcut, illustrated in Leonard Slatkes, "Rembrandt's Elephant," *Simiolus* 11 (1980), 7–13, is not discussed in relation to Job 40, yet this passage accounts for the sword, 9.

Behemoth of Job, it enjoys the filtered shade of the willows.[30] The huge beast in Job implies that only God, who subdues the powerful elephant (Satan), can tame humankind's overwhelming propensities for sin.

In Christian terms the victory over Satan is achieved only by Christ. This basic idea was central to the thinking of Orthodox Calvinists, Remonstrants (who challenged the doctrine of pre-destination), and Mennonites (also known as Dutch Anabaptists). Orthodox Calvinists, however, placed special emphasis on the Fall, because they believed that humankind, in its utter depravity, had fallen into a state of degradation and corruption, from which only God's elect could escape, since the edict of eternal reprobation and election (predestination) was determined at Creation and was eternal.[31] Remonstrants and Mennonites, who agreed with Orthodox Calvinists that the Holy Spirit played a crucial role in helping humankind combat sin, rejected the immutable decree of predestination and insisted that prayer, faith, and atonement by the grace of God could bring redemption to the sinner.[32] Remonstrants and Mennonites

30 While the portrayal of a single elephant in Eden is unprecedented in art, Rembrandt's tamed beast lies securely within the visual tradition. Peaceful wild animals are not uncommon in scenes of Paradise in art, and such artists as Rubens, in collaboration with Jan Bruegel the Younger, portrayed kitten-like lions and tigers rollicking in the grass (The Hague, Mauritshuis). See Arianne Faber Kolb, *Jan Brueghel the Elder: The Entry of the Animals into Noah's Ark* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 2005), who discusses the title picture as well as the Paradise collaboration with Rubens. It should also be noted that Hieronymus Bosch's celebrated triptych, *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (Madrid, Prado), also features a Paradise left wing that includes a variety of exotic African animals, including an elephant as well as a giraffe, plus some imaginary beasts, both a unicorn and a flop-eared kangaroo beside the giraffe. Rembrandt's invocation of Satan through animal imagery relates to artistic conventions that include Dürer's *Adam and Eve* (1512, Bartsch 17) from the *Small Passion*, where a wild boar invokes Satan, In Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem's painting, *Fall of Man*, a goat serves as the image of the devil (1622, Hamburg, Kunsthalle). See Christian Tümpel, *Im Lichte Rembrandts. Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst*, exh. cat. (Munich: Kinkhardt and Biermann, 1994), 222, cat. 2.

31 The issue concerning whether God's eternal decree was issued before the Fall (Supralapsarianism), or as a consequence of it (Infralapsarianism), was no longer a point of dispute after 1619. Even in the Synod of Dort (1618–19) the majority of Counter-Remonstrants adhered to Infralapsarianism. See Frederick Calder, *Memoirs of Simon Episcopius* (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1837), 46.

32 The Dutch, Remonstrant preacher, Simon Episcopius, believed there was always a way back from sin through prayer, Calder, *Memoirs of Simon Episcopius*, 46.

believed that each person had his own particular fall from grace, from which the believer might be restored.[33]

Other Protestant sects such as Socinianism and Pelagianism devalued the effect of the Fall altogether, since Adam and Eve were not considered instigators of sin and death in the world; they held that Adam's sin passed to humankind only by bad example.[34] Calvin strenuously opposed this point of view in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and called such "heresy" the "Pelagian cavil."[35] The contemporary Dutch Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel, who often engaged in discussions with Christians and whose works were read by non-Jews, also took a stand on some of these hotly contested issues in his publication of 1642, which appeared in Latin and Spanish, *De la fragilidad humana, y inclinacion del hombre al peccado* ("On the Weakness of Humankind, or Humankind's Inclination to Sin"). This treatise opposed Socinianism, Pelagianism, and predestination, and blamed humankind's pronounced propensity for sin on Adam, but declared that the repentant sinner may be redeemed by following God's precepts.[36] No other contemporary religious group placed as much emphasis upon the tragic nature of this event as the Orthodox Calvinists, who closely adhered to the ideas of John Calvin that are integral to Rembrandt's interpretation.

The print invokes the heavy consequences of the Fall, even though Adam has not yet eaten the fruit.[37] Adam and Eve in the etching seem doomed. Their bodies adduce their wretched mortality.[38] Adam's aging body is frail and

---

33 The Anabaptist leaders, Menno Simons (1496–1561) and Dirck Philips (1504–68) advocated these beliefs. See William Edward Keeney, *The Development of Dutch Anabaptist Thought and Practice From 1539–1564* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1968), 67–68.

34 Socinian doctrines of faith were conveyed in the Racovian Catechism of 1605. On Adam's sin see Valentin Smalcius, *The Racovian Catechisme* (Amsterdam: Brooer Janz, 1652), 142–43.

35 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845–46), book II, chapter 1, sections 6–7.

36 There is no reason to postulate that Rembrandt was influenced by this text. Menasseh's publication demonstrates how contemporary arguments on Adam and Eve resonated in many different religious faiths. See discussion of Adam's sin in Menasseh ben Israel, *Dissertatio de fragilitate humana ex lapsu Adami: deque divino in bono opera auxilio, ex Sacris Scripturis . . .* (Amsterdam: Sumptibus auctoris, 1642), 6, 26, 32, 51–53, 83.

37 Simon Episcopius said that when the first couple was cast out of paradise, they were "debarred from the Tree of Life which was the symbol, or token, or pledge of a blessed immortality," *Confession*, 119.

38 Van der Coelen, *Patriarchs, Angels and Prophets*, 66–67, no. 2.

flaccid; Eve's is ponderous and earthy. Both have brutal, animal-like features. Rembrandt's portrayal of the first man and woman in this manner is unusual, since he does not depict them as youthful, idealized figures as was the case in works by Dürer (Fig. 13.2), Lucas van Leyden (Fig. 13.3), Cornelis Cornelisz van Haarlem, Rubens, and others.[39] A probable textual source for Rembrandt's distinctive approach is 1 Corinthians 15, which both Calvin and Grotius cited in their commentaries on the Creation and Fall.[40] Calvin excluded the human body as an image of the Creator since "nothing carries the image of God except a spirit." St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:43 compared the earthly human body with the body of the resurrection: "It (the earthly body) is sown in dishonor. It (the heavenly body) is raised up in glory. It is sown in weakness. It is raised up in power."

Many texts give special emphasis to the figure of Adam. The Remonstrant Grotius, in *The Defense of the Catholic Faith*, refers to 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22 in discussing Adam's nature:

> The animal condition of Adam is discoursed upon in twenty verses, and more, by the apostle [in 1 Corinthians 15]: for here death is opposed to the resurrection: but there the qualities of the body at the first created, and afterwards raised again, are compared with one another.[41]

As expressed in the *Statenbijbel* notes to 1 Corinthians 15:45, humankind "received from the first Adam a natural or animal body, so also by the second Adam, namely Christ, we shall obtain a spiritual body." In light of these readings, Rembrandt may have intended to portray the miserable, corrupted bodies of the first couple in their "animal condition." The message implicit in Rembrandt's print is that only God, who tames the wild elephant, can curb Adam and Eve's enslavement to sin and transform their "weak" and "dishonored" flesh into a spiritual body of "power" and "glory."[42]

---

39 See examples in art of alluring figures of Eve in note 17.

40 Calvin, *Genesis*, 112 and *Institutes*, book 2, chapter 1, section 6.

41 Hugo Grotius, *A Defence of the Catholick Faith concerning the Satisfaction of Christ*, trans. W. H. (London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst and Jonathan Robinson, 1692), 284.

42 1 Corinthians 15:43. Rembrandt's image arose in opposition to Dürer's classically-inspired Adam and Eve, whose beauty (particularly before the Fall) exemplifies a view of humankind's body as an image of God's perfection (1504, engraving).

References

Works Published before 1800

Bible (Statenbijbel). 1657. *The Dutch Annotations upon the whole Bible, or all the Holy Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament . . ., translated by Theodore Haak*. London: Henry Hills.

———. 1637. dat is de gantſche H. Schrifture, vervattende alle de Canonijcke Boecken des Ouden en des Nieuwen Testaments, Door laſt der Hoogh-Mog: Heeren Staten Generael van de Vereenighde Nederlanden en volgens het Beſluyt van de Synode Nationael, gehouden tot Dordrecht in de Iaren 1618 en 1619. . . . Leiden: Paulus Aertsz van Ravensteyn.

Episcopius, Simon. 1676. *The Confession or declaration of the ministers or pastors which in the United Provinces are called Remonstrants, concerning the chief points of Christian Religion.* London: Francis Smith.

Grotius, Hugo. 1692. *A Defence of the Catholick Faith concerning the Satisfaction of Christ*. Trans. W. H. London: Printed for Thomas Parkhurst and Jonathan Robinson.

Menasseh ben Israel. 1642. *Dissertatio de fragilitate humana ex lapsu Adami: deque divino in bono opera auxilio, ex Sacris Scripturis* [. . .] Amsterdam: Sumptibus auctoris.

Sandys, George. 1640. *Annotations to "Christ's Passion. A Tragedie"* London: John Legatt.

Smalcius, Valentin. 1652. *The Racovian Catechisme*. Amsterdam: Brooer Janz.

Works Published after 1800

Ackley, Clifford S., Ronni Baer, Thomas E. Rassieur and William W. Robinson. 2003. *Rembrandt's Journey. Painter, Draftsman, Etcher.* Exh. cat. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts Publications.

Bevers, Holm, Peter Schatborn and Barbara Welzel. 1991–92. *Rembrandt: the Master and His Workshop Workshop* 2: *Drawings and Etchings.* Exh. cat. Trans. Elizabeth Clegg et al. and (ed.) by Sally Salvesen. Berlin: Gemäldegalerie Staatlicher Museen.

Calder, Frederick. 1837. *Memoirs of Simon Episcopius.* New York: T. Mason and G. Lane.

Calvin, John. 1847. *Commentaries on The First Book of Moses called Genesis*. Trans. John King. Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society.

———. 1845–46. *Institutes of the Christian Religion.* Trans. Henry Beveridge. Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society.

Coelen, Peter van der (ed.). 1996. *Patriarchs, Angels and Prophets*. Exh. cat. Amsterdam: Museum Het Rembrandthuis.

Frey, Hermann Heinrich. 1978. *Therobiblia: Biblisch Thier- Vogel-und Fischbuch*. Leipzig: Johann Beyers, 1595. Reprint, Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt.

Josephus, Flavius. 1987. *The Works of Josephus.* Trans. William Whiston. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers.

Keeney, William Edward. 1968. *The Development of Dutch Anabaptist Thought and Practice from 1539–1564*. Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf.

Kolb, Arianne Faber. 2005. *Jan Brueghel the Elder: The Entry of the Animals into Noah's Ark*. Los Angeles: Getty Museum.

Perlove, Shelley, and Larry Silver. 2009. *Rembrandt's Faith: Church and Temple in the Dutch Golden Age*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Perlove, Shelley. 1993. An Irenic Vision of Utopia: Rembrandt's *Triumph of Mordecai* and the New Jerusalem. *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56: 38–60

———. 1994–99. Awaiting the Messiah: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Late Work of Rembrandt. *Bulletin of the University of Michigan Museum* 11 (5): 85–113.

Silver, Larry and Susan Smith. 1978. Carnal Knowledge: The Late Engravings of Lucas van Leyden. *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 29: 239–98.

Silver, Larry. 1986. *Figure nude, historie e poesie*: Jan Gossaert and the Renaissance Nude in the Netherlands. *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 37: 1–40.

Slatkes, Leonard. 1980. Rembrandt's Elephant. *Simiolus* 11: 7–13.

Tümpel, Christian with contrib. Astrid Tümpel. 1993. *Rembrandt: All Paintings in Colour*. Rev. and (ed.) Ivan Gaskell. Second edition. Antwerp: Fonds Mercator.

Tümpel, Christian and Astrid Tümpel. 1970. *Rembrandt legt die Bible aus*. Exh. cat. Berlin: Kupferstichkabinett der Staaltichen Museen Preubischer Kulturbesitz.

Tümpel, Christian (ed.). 1991. *Het Oude Testament in de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw*, Exh. cat. Amsterdam: Joods Historisch Museum.

———. 1996. Rembrandt's Old Testament Etchings. In *Patriarchs, Angels, and Prophets: The Old Testament in Netherlandish Printmaking from Lucas van Leyden to Rembrandt*. Exh. cat., (ed.) Peter van der Coelen, 31–37. Amsterdam: Museum het Rembrandthuis.

———. 1994. *Im Lichte Rembrandts. Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der niederländischen Kunst*. Exh. cat. Munich: Kinkhardt and Biermann, 1994.

Van Gelder, Roelof, and Jaap van der Veen. 1999. A Collector's Cabinet in the Breestraat: Rembrandt as a Lover of Art and Curiosities. In *Rembrandt's Treasures*, (ed.) Bob van den Boogert. Zwolle: Waanders.

White, Christopher. 1999. *Rembrandt as an Etcher. A Study of the Artist at Work*. Second edition. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Zell, Michael. 2002. *Reframing Rembrandt: Jews and the Christian Image in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

PART 4

Artefacts and Material Culture

CHAPTER 14

Salience and the Snail: Liminality and Incarnation in Francesco del Cossa's *Annunciation* (c. 1470)

Patricia Simons

A mundane snail makes its way across the foreground of Francesco del Cossa's *Annunciation*, an altarpiece painted around 1468–70 for the sanctuary of the Franciscan Osservanza in Bologna, but now in Dresden (Figs. 14.1 and 14.2).[1] Two contrasting interpretations have been made of the gastropod: it draws an analogy between the Virgin's pure impregnation and the snail conceiving by dew, or its overlarge scale and audacious visibility are a declaration of art's ingenious deception. Traditional iconographers advocate the former view, while the more adventurous art historian and semiotician Daniel Arasse has propounded the latter interpretation.[2] In keeping with Charles Zika's illuminating work on the presence of the supernatural in the everyday world, I want to move beyond this opposition between two very different approaches to visual evidence, of straightforward symbol on the one hand or modernist sign of aesthetic self-consciousness on the other. Instead, if we take the historical context of illusion into account, the snail is an allusive signifier that works more by visual than iconographic means, and in that sense my reading agrees with Arasse. Rather than the illustration of a single meaning or 'code,' the snail is a constitutive and polysemous element that spurs contemplative prayer and humility before the miracle of the Incarnation. Thus, my paper moves away from Arasse by situating the snail in historical and material circumstances as well as considering visual and aesthetic effects.

1 Recent literature includes Angela Oberer's entry in *Il trionfo di Bacco. Capolavori della scuola ferrarese a Dresda 1480–1620*, (ed.) Gregor J. M. Weber (Turin: Umberto Allemandi, 2002), 83–85, and 86–88 for the predella of the *Nativity*; Vittorio Sgarbi, *Francesco del Cossa* (Milan/Geneva: Rizzoli/Skira, 2003), 46–62, 224–25. Three panels, of *St Clare, St Catherine of Alexandria* and a *Franciscan in prayer*, may be from the now-lost frame: Mauro Natale, ed., *Cosmè Tura e Francesco del Cossa: l'arte a Ferrara nell'età di Borso d'Este* (Ferrara: Ferrara Arte, 2007), 390–93 nos. 102–4.

2 Helen Ettlinger, "The Virgin Snail," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41 (1978): 316; Daniel Arasse, *On n'y voit rien: descriptions* (Paris: Denoël, 2000), 31–56. Many of Arasse's points were earlier raised in his *L'Annonciation italienne. Une histoire de perspective* (Paris: Hazan, 1999), 199, 202–6.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_016

FIGURE 14.1 *Francesco del Cossa*, The Annunciation, *oil on poplar, c. 1468–70. Gemaeldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden (Inv. Gal. Nr. 43).*
PHOTO: BPK, BERLIN / HANS-PETER LUT. / ART RESOURCE, NY.

Material conditions of representation and of viewing are decisive. The snail travels exactly along the *barbe*, the ridge of paint and gesso built up at the edge of a frame. Just as gesso is the ground for the paint, so paint is the surface for the snail. Meaning thus melds with making. Positioned on the line

FIGURE 14.2 *Snail, detail of fig. 14.1.*

where frame and paint meet, it wittily stresses the liminal threshold between divine and human, fictive and actual, a perfect theme for the moment of the Annunciation when the divine became flesh. Like the distant strolling dog and humans taking the air at a far off window, the snail is a thoroughly earthly being that does not notice the astounding miracle taking place. Yet as an object it also acts as a hinge joining two otherwise incommensurable realms, bridging the gulf miraculously crossed at the time of the Virgin's impregnation by celestial spirit.

Viewers are not only captivated by the amusing mollusc but also engaged by the theatrical scenario of newly arrived Gabriel, seemingly on a diagonal rush from their prosaic sphere, and by the stone beam that thrusts out over both his and their heads. Alongside worldly surface, then, the altarpiece also insists on salience, on fictive projection into the viewer's experience and space in order to assert the immanence of the divine. As with the snail, there is a visual dialectic between different planes of existence. Such contradictions are central to the Christian doctrines of Incarnation and transubstantiation.

At a time when art historians believed that unusual features like the snail had to be either an incidental detail of naturalistic art or a clear symbol, in 1978 Helen Ettlinger seemed to have cracked the code. She found in a small book on the prefiguration of the Virgin's pregnancy an analogy with snails: "If the dew of the clear air can make the sea snail pregnant, then God in virtue can make His mother pregnant."[3] The compilation of examples, attributed to the Austrian Dominican Francis of Retz (c. 1343–1427), dates from the early fifteenth century but the printed form of *Defensorium inviolatae virginitatis Mariae* first appeared only around 1470–72 and all the surviving fifteenth-century versions

3 *"Defensorium inviolatae virginitatis Mariae" aus der Druckerei der Hurus in Saragossa in Faksimile-Reproduktion*, (ed.) Wilhelm Ludwig Schreiber (Weimar: Gesellschaft der Bibliophilen, 1910), 5, Pl. 6, no. 19; Ettlinger, "Virgin Snail," 316.

were issued from non-Italian, chiefly German, presses.[4] It is unclear what impact the slim book had in Italy at the time the altarpiece was produced, especially amongst Franciscans. Yet scholars take Retz's single sentence as proof that Cossa's snail was a sign of the "perpetual virginity of Mary."[5] Even Arasse, who mocks the certitude of the iconographic approach, nevertheless accepts the signification, despite believing that a snail appears in no other *Annunciation*.[6]

But there is cause for caution, for a degree of scepticism about a linear, exclusive understanding of the snail in terms of definitive code. The *Defensorium* was a popular approximation of a heavily illustrated block book, not a tome of learned theology. Diana is confused with Danaë, for instance, and popular lore about animals is reiterated. The source cited for the snails, Isidore of Seville's seventh-century *Etymology*, is misunderstood because it discusses shellfish (*oceloe*, rather than snail, *coclea*) conceiving pearls "by means of celestial dew."[7] The most likely source for the notion that snails were virginal is probably another faulty transmission of this renowned encyclopaedia rather than Retz's text, which in many editions illustrates the dew but not the snails. A twelfth-century bestiary attributed to Hugh of Saint Victor (on the generation of pearls) and Albert the Great's thirteenth-century paean to the Virgin Mary are the two most likely sources, though these too conflate shell (*concha*) with snail.[8] It is not helpful to cite Mircea Eliade's rather universalizing study of the religious symbolism of shells in a broad range of cultures and periods, for he finds that the generic shell "appears in all the essential activities of the

4 See the Incunabula Short Title Catalogue, http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/istc/ (search for *Defensorium inviolatae*), which includes links to several electronic facsimiles.

5 Ettlinger, "Virgin Snail," 316 (here quoted); Oberer in Weber, *Il trionfo di Bacco*, 84 (misinterpreting the text as referring to the Immaculate Conception).

6 Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 40, 43, 44, 45 for the Virgin, 33, 40–41 on no other *Annunciation* (for an example he did not know, see n. 12 below). He notes the possible exception of Girolamo da Cremona's *Annunciation* but he was right to suspect that what might seem to be empty shells are actually pebbles: Piero Torriti, *La Pinacoteca nazionale di Siena: I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo* (Genoa: Sagep, 1977), 350.

7 The text reproduced in *Defensorium inviolatae*, Pl. 6, cites Isidore of Seville. See *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. Stephen A. Barney (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 262 (12.6.49), 324 (16.10.1).

8 Hugh of Saint Victor, *De Beatiis*, 2:55 (*Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina*, (ed.) J.-P. Migne, Paris, 1854, vol. 177, cols. 80–82); Albertus Magnus, *De Laudibus*, 9:12 (*Opera omnia*, (ed.) Auguste Borgnet, Paris, 1898, vol. 36, 439); *Orsanmichele a Firenze / Orsanmichele Florence*, (ed.) Diane Zervas (Modena: Panini, 1996), text vol., 100–1 (in which *conchae* is said to have been used for both shells and snails). I thank Megan Holmes for this last reference.

life of man and of the collectivity: birth, initiation, marriage, death, agricultural and religious ceremonies, etc."[9] His brief discussion of the snail claims that it is one of the "emblems of love and marriage," though he refers specifically only to its representation of "conception, pregnancy and parturition" in Aztec culture.[10]

The *Defensorium* booklet popularized in print the linguistic misunderstanding about Marian symbolism, which had already informed the decorative language of several fourteenth-century Italian monuments. Scallop shells alternate with stylized, almost unrecognizable, snail shells throughout the mouldings of Orcagna's marble tabernacle located within the Florentine granary and chapel of Orsanmichele, finished in 1359.[11] That city's Cathedral displayed on its high altar a polyptych painted by Bernardo Daddi (c. 1280–1348) and in its predella black snails as well as white doves were recurring motifs on the cloth of honour hanging behind the Virgin in the *Annunciation*.[12]

Yet the symbolism of the lowly animal was neither exclusively Marian nor solely related to conception. Bestiaries did not always conflate snail with seashell, instead grouping it with other base creatures of the earth such as centipedes, enabling a range of interpretations tied to humility and abjection.[13] Land snails were familiar to Europeans, easily cited as examples of sluggishness and sloth. They attracted a wide range of symbolic meanings, such as resurrection, because, like Christ in the tomb, the beings encased in shells supposedly emerged from the earth after months of burial. Thus, an inverted,

---

9 Mircea Eliade, *Images et symbols. Essais sur le symbolisme magico-religieux* (Paris; Gallimard, 1952), 190; Philip Mairet, trans., *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 144. Zervas, *Orsanmichele*, 118, n. 10 refers to 164–98 of the 1952 edition.

10 Eliade, *Images et symbols*, 173–75 and 132–33.

11 Gert Kreytenberg, *Orcagna's Tabernacle in Orsanmichele* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 41; Zervas, *Orsanmichele*, 100–1 (which also refers to generic shells on the base of the Cappella di Piazza in Siena, begun in 1352, and fig. 36 illustrates the detail of a bisected snail carved on a pilaster shaft of the screen in S. Maria dei Miracoli, Venice, from the later fifteenth century).

12 Lisa Monnas, *Merchants, Princes and Painters: Silk Fabrics in Italian and Northern Paintings 1300–1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 80 and fig. 77.

13 An English bestiary of c. 1230, for instance, clusters the snail with centipedes, silkworms and maggots, while shells appear several folios later with fish and molluscs: Paul Binski and Patrick Zutshi, *Western Illuminated Manuscripts: A Catalogue of the Collection in Cambridge University Library* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 89, no. 96. A bestiary of the second quarter of the fifteenth century similarly associated snails with worms: 216 no. 231.

empty snail shell on the ground to the right of *The Entombment* painted by Titian around 1520 prefigures Christ's rise.[14] On other occasions, the snail's shell led it to signify domestic privacy. The eighth-century BCE Greek poet Hesiod referred to the animal as "house-carrier" and pretentious Roman physicians used words like *domiporta* instead of *coclea* according to Cicero.[15] Cowardice was amusingly derided when knights and warriors showed fear at the sight of a mere snail.[16] The slippery nature of the creatures is appropriately reflected in three different interpretations scholars have accorded a snail at the feet of St Francis in Carlo Crivelli's altarpiece of *The Virgin and Child with Saints Francis and Sebastian, and the donor Oradea Becchetti* (1491) (Fig. 14.3). The animal could signal the donor's recognition of her sinfulness, the Virgin's Immaculate Conception, or generic laziness.[17]

However, the literally lowly being, thought to emerge from mud, may here primarily indicate humility and penance. Although Mary's meek response to Gabriele's visitation was frequently celebrated, it is particularly stressed as exemplary in an early fourteenth-century illustrated manuscript directed at Franciscan nuns, and might bring to mind the unassuming snail.[18] Such a connotation of humility would have been appropriate to Crivelli's patron, a

14 The canvas is in the Louvre: Peter Humfrey, *Titian: The Complete Paintings* (Ghent: Ludion, 2007), 112, no. 64.

15 Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 571, trans. Hugh G. Evelyn-White, rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), 45; Cicero, *De Divinatione*, 2.64.133 (which mentions several other euphemisms, including *terrigenam*, "earth-engendered").

16 For more on the various interpretations cited here, see Lillian Randall, "The Snail in Gothic Marginal Warfare," *Speculum* 37 (1962): 358–67; Roger Pinon, "La polysémie symbolique de la limace et de l'escargot dans le langage en Occident," in *Mélanges de Philologie Romane offerts à Charles Camproux* (Montpellier: C.E.O., 1978), vol. II, 1055–73; M. A. Dolfuss, "Les mollusques terrestres dans l'art et archaeologie," *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France* (1978–79): 30–39; Herbert Friedmann, *A Bestiary for Saint Jerome: Animal Symbolism in European Religious Art* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1980), 99 n. 12, 291, 293; Malcolm Jones, *The Secret Middle Ages* (Phoenix Mill: Sutton, 2002), 132–33, 160–61, 198, 343 n. 9; Hope Werness, *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Animal Symbolism in Art* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 375–76.

17 See, respectively, Ronald Lightbown, *Carlo Crivelli* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 465, citing George Ferguson, *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 25, which supplies no sources; Oberer, in Weber, *Il trionfo di Bacco*, 85, citing Ettlinger; Liliana Leopardi, "Aesthetic hybrids: interpreting Carlo Crivelli's ornamental style," PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 2007, 36–37, citing a secondary source which actually does not discuss snails.

18 Pseudo-Bonaventura, *Meditations on the Life of Christ: An Illustrated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century*, (ed.) and trans. Isa Ragusa and Rosalie Green (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 15–21.

FIGURE 14.3 *Carlo Crivelli*, The Virgin and Child with Saints Francis and Sebastian, *egg and oil on poplar, 1491. Presented by Elizabeth Mary, widow of the second Marquess of Westminster, 1870* (NG807). *National Gallery, London.*
PHOTO: NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON / ART RESOURCE, NY.

pious widow heavily cloaked in plain, dark garb, represented in such a minuscule scale that her praying hands are shorter than the stretch of the snail. Her name meant "Pray to God," an act she performs while intently gazing up at the gigantic enthroned Virgin Mary and Holy Child. In this she exemplifies the behaviour of those worshippers who would seek the benefit of indulgences

granted to the altar in 1490, as long as they approached with devout humility and made offerings on certain feast days.[19]

Cossa's snail chiefly results from the conjunction of the biological legend with the Franciscan order's renowned Marian devotion. I know of only three fifteenth-century Italian altarpieces depicting living snails, each Franciscan.[20] Crivelli's panel was commissioned for a chapel in San Francesco, Fabriano (Fig. 14.3); Cossa's altarpiece (Fig. 14.1) adorned a Franciscan Observant convent, as did the third altarpiece, one of c.1480 by Pietro di Francesco Orioli (Fig. 14.4). Originally in San Bernardino di Vetreta and now housed in the Museo di Arte Sacra of Massa Marittima, his *Adoration of the Christ Child* depicts Mary, Joseph and the Franciscan saints Bernardino of Siena and Anthony of Padua kneeling on the ground to worship the new-born Christ.[21] A snail is prominent and alone in the foreground, as in the other two altarpieces, close to the viewer and ostentatiously at ground level. An early fourteenth-century Franciscan preacher's manual from England likened "a patient and humble person" bowing their head before a superior to a snail that withdraws its "horns."[22] It is possible that Franciscans, especially members of the Observant party, likened their founder and their Order's ideals of poverty and simplicity to the snail. One of the earliest episodes of Francis's religious life has him prostrating himself in prayer then being admonished as a vile creature while supine.[23] Famously, the ground served as his dining table and bed.[24]

---

19 On the indulgences see Lightbown, *Crivelli*, 463, 508 (Appendix VI: "cum devotione humili accedatis et de bonis . . .").

20 A snail is one of three prominent symbolic elements clustered in the foreground of Hans Baldung Grien's *Holy Family in a Landscape* (c. 1511–12), but the German painting is not an altarpiece. See Bernard Aikema and Beverly Louise Brown (eds.), *Renaissance Venice and the North* (New York: Rizzoli, 2000), 510–11 no. 145. I thank Megan Holmes for calling my attention to this panel.

21 Alessandro Angelini, "Pietro Orioli e il momento 'urbinate' della pittura senese del Quattrocento," *Prospettiva* 30 (1982): 30–31; Luciano Bellosi, ed., *Francesco di Giorgio e il Rinascimento a Siena 1450–1500* (Milan: Electa, 1993), 364–65. Arasse does not mention the painting.

22 *Fasciculus Morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook*, trans. Siegfried Wenzel (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 136–37 (with the Latin in parallel).

23 *I fioretti del glorioso Messere Santo Francesco e de' suoi fratelli*, (ed.) G. Passerini, 2nd ed. (Florence: Sansoni, 1919), 7–10, including a fifteenth-century drawing of the episode in which St Francis is thrice trod upon.

24 Passerini, *Fioretti*, 42, 50.

FIGURE 14.4 *Pietro di Francesco Orioli*, Adoration of the Christ Child with Saints St Bernardino of Siena and Anthony of Padua, *c. 1480. Museo di Arte Sacra, Massa Marittima* (*no. 14*).
PHOTO: ALINARI / ART RESOURCE, NY.

Penitent abnegation is also the probable connotation of what appears to be an empty snail's shell and that of another mollusc at Jerome's feet in a stand-alone panel of the saint in the desert painted around 1485 by Filippino Lippi.[25] Plutarch's reference to the mean, uncomfortable life of a snail (*cochlion*) may have been a classical, Greek reference unknown to the average patron of religious paintings, yet it voiced an understandable and doubtless common sentiment.[26] Cited in Pierio Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica* (first printed in 1556), the passage buttressed his understanding of the precept that one should forsake earthly luxuries and pleasures.[27]

In visual and material terms too, snails were modest, fittingly depicted around 1487 on floor tiles in another chapel within the city of Bologna, there to be stepped upon by pious humans.[28] They populated the foliate and floral margins of carved borders, from the ancient Roman altar of the Ara Pacis to the *all'antica* reliefs of the 1480s for S. Maria dei Miracoli in Venice, filled with acanthus leaves and hybrids. Into the sixteenth century, snails crawl amongst flowers and exist alongside butterflies in the initials and margins of Netherlandish manuscripts.[29] They inhabit the borders of della Robbia roundels too, and in a walnut frame for a painting carved in Siena around 1500 a snail accompanies a grasshopper, reptiles and birds amidst scrolling acanthus, a fountain and playful putti.[30] A snail is one biological detail betwixt strawberries, acanthus

25 Patrizia Zambrano and Jonathan Katz Nelson, *Filippino Lippi* (Milan: Electa, 2004), 355–56, no. 38. Four other paintings of the penitent Jerome include snails amongst the varied animals, but they are "easily overlooked" (Friedmann, *A Bestiary for Saint Jerome*, 291) and unlikely to bear great symbolic weight.

26 Plutarch, "De cupiditate divitiarum," 5, in *Moralia* 525E (vol. VII, 524 of the Loeb edition).

27 Joannis Pierii Valeriani, *Hieroglyphica* (Cologne, 1685), 341 (Bk. 28, Chs. 58–59). This reading probably relates to Dürer's drawing of 1515 in the margin of a page of Emperor Maximilian's prayerbook showing a musical Cupid/putto placing his foot on a snail: Walter Strauss, *The Complete Drawings of Albrecht Dürer* (New York: Abaris Books, 1974), vol. 3, 1550, no. 1515/38. Cupid was sometimes shown riding a snail, for example, in German engravings including one of 1524 formerly attributed to Hans Leinberger (in the British Museum, 1851,1213.118), and on a maiolica plate (in the Victoria and Albert Museum, 1792–1855).

28 Carmen Ravanelli Guidotti, *Il pavimento della cappella Vaselli in San Petronio a Bologna* (Bologna: Grafis, 1988), 272, nos 570–7.

29 Sixteenth-century examples include several sheets in the Victoria and Albert Museum, manuscript 3011, manuscript 4031, and manuscript 9002D; Binski and Zutshi, *Western Illuminated Manuscripts*, 261, no. 286. For earlier border decorations with snails see Binski and Zutshi, 180, no. 190, 205, no. 218 (mock combat), and n. 31 below.

30 Allan Marquand, *Giovanni della Robbia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1920), 159, no. 162, 161–62, no. 165, 183, no. 189. The wooden frame is in the Victoria and Albert

leaves, flowers and birds in many manuscript borders, sometimes near Marian narratives.[31] Rather than always deeply symbolic, however, these animals, like those in countless other borders, pay witness to the profusion of god's universe and it is their very ordinariness that is significant, along with a capacity to amuse because they are so beguilingly inconsequential. Ornamental and/or symbolic, the small snail was relatively familiar in the visual repertoire, though it grew in popularity after Cossa's altarpiece. As far as I know, Cossa was the first painter to incorporate it into a narrative, followed within a decade by Orioli. Compared to other depicted gastropods, Cossa has so accurately observed a specimen that I believe it can be identified as the edible Helix pomatia, common throughout much of Europe and called the Burgundy or Roman snail. Although less closely noted by Orioli, the apparently naturalistic, trifling detail adds to the appearance of mundane reality in the two altarpieces, but the snail also carries with it a range of allusions and meanings that enrich the contemplative viewing experience of devotees.

The marginal yet blatant snail in Dresden provides a witty vignette of terrestrial biota at its most subservient to complement the awesome marvel of the Incarnation, each instances of divine creation but at opposite ends of the spectrum. Clearly, though, Cossa's mollusc is more than that, for uniquely it exists at the absolute edge of the painted plane and thence, more than its fellows in other altarpieces, it directly engages the eyes of kneeling officiants and devotees. It adopts the marginal position of mere ornamentation while looming large in both literal and figurative senses. Crucially, no slime is evident because it is seen exactly at eye level rather than from above, as is also clear from the closeness of its shell to the ground. This angle of view confirms that the ideal witness is positioned with eyes close to the lower frame of the panel, humbly kneeling at or near the altar, perhaps following the model of the kneeling Franciscan friar who concentrates on prayer in a small panel that may have been on the left side of the predella.[32] Oradea Becchetti's obeisance and upturned face (Fig. 14.3) portray the correct attitude, although her eyes almost look skyward due to the exaggerated scale. This posture, we will see,

---

Museum (926–1900). The snail and grasshopper at the top of the frame are visible in the detail reproduced in an essay on the wood carver: Stella Fraschetti, "Antonio di Neri Barili (Siena, 1453–1516)," in *Domenico Beccafumi e il suo tempo* (Milan: Electa, 1990), 550, fig. 6.

31 Binski and Zutshi, *Western Illuminated Manuscripts*, 247, no. 268 (Pl. XC) is an English Psalter of the third quarter of the fifteenth century with a snail near an initial with the *Annunciation*, and 324 no. 353 (Pl. CXV) is a French Book of Hours of the last quarter of the fifteenth century with a snail in the border surrounding a *Visitation*.

32 Natale, *Cosmè Tura*, 392–93, no. 104.

is critical to the operation of the vanishing point. Viewers must kneel for the scale to make sense, because the altarpiece and its figures are under life size, and *standing* close to it turns the experience into that of a modern museum attendee instead of a pious believer within a chapel.

In the midst of travel, antennae and feelers extended, the snail is focused on diurnal existence. As fellow beings on this mortal coil, we can take its model of concentration and slow pace and apply it to contemplation and prayer. Kneeling beneath the central column, bracketed by a slightly angled view of Gabriel's foot on the left and the mollusc to the right, we see the vivid drama that runs diagonally from the archangel's salutation to Mary's humble acceptance. Like Mary, we move from a snail-like moment of ordinary life to awe at the history-making irruption of the heavenly. Another oblique line runs from God and the dove framed in the sky far above Gabriel to meet at the apex of a V in the body of impregnated Mary. Arasse has noted that God is about the same size as the snail, but this does not make them visually or meaningfully equivalent.[33] The incongruence is pictorially logical due to the vast distance dividing heaven from earth. The breach is so grand that only visual contradiction can dare to represent what is beyond human understanding. Furthermore, Mary is too large in comparison to the height of the entablature nearby, fitting since she is human yet uniquely privileged as the bearer of the Son. The large snail mediates between the scale of humans kneeling before the altarpiece and Mary's symbolic grandeur. The multivalence of the snail, trivial yet part of God's universe, accurately rendered but obtrusive, encourages numerous contemplative thoughts, which rest on visual and natural connotations more than iconographic arcana or pure aesthetics. The charm and challenge of Cossa's altarpiece is epitomised by the gastropod.

The panel's worldly characters do not notice the miracle. The snail crawling along on the margin, not turned one iota towards the narrative, encapsulates a short-sighted, spiritually barren focus on the here and now. Fifteenth-century painters sometimes represent potential witnesses who poignantly ignore the profound Biblical event nearby. While Christ is flagellated in Pilate's palace, for instance, three important men of the world nevertheless continue their self-involved conversation in Piero della Francesca's impeccable *Flagellation* (c. 1455–60). So too in Antonello da Messina's *Martyrdom of St Sebastian* (Fig. 14.5; 1478, in Dresden), women atop arcades or men in the streets are phlegmatic about the spectacle or disregard the draining away of a man's blood in the main piazza of a town that has lost its soul. So bereft is the pagan city that the public guard has forgotten his duty of watchfulness and snores on

33 Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 37–39.

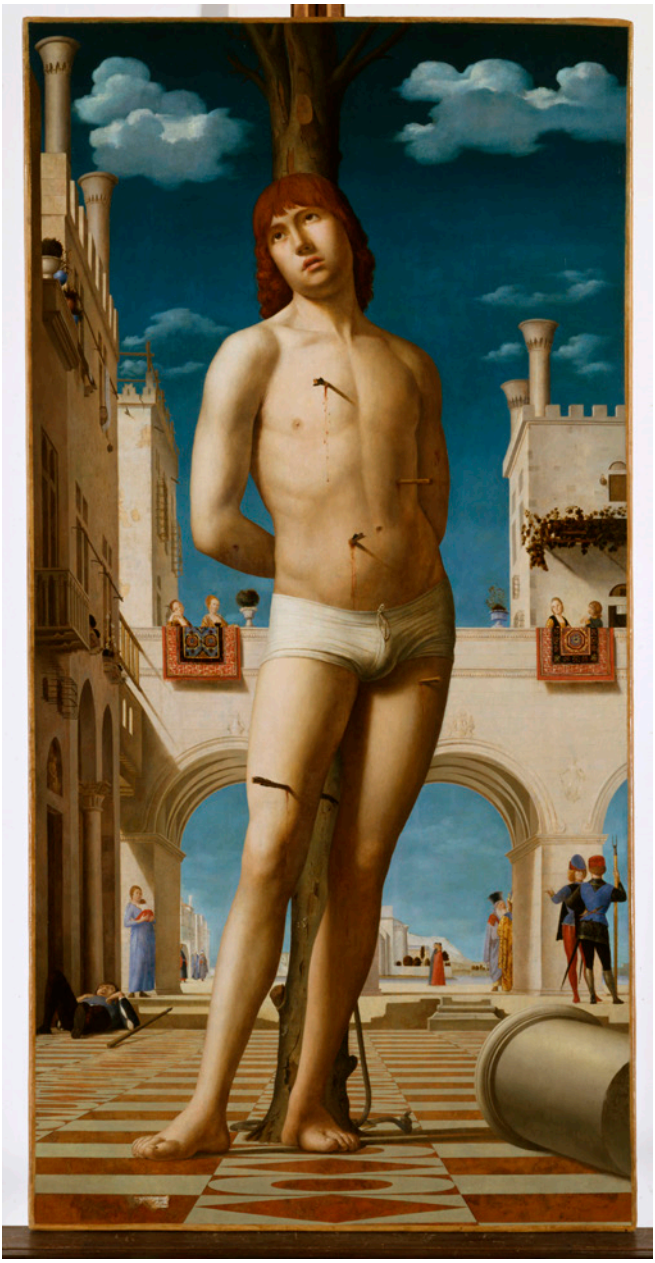

FIGURE 14.5 *Antonello da Messina*, Martyrdom of St Sebastian, *oil on wood transferred to canvas, 1478. Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden* (*Gal.-Nr. 52*).
PHOTO: BPK, BERLIN / ELKE ESTEL / HANS-PETER KLUT / ART RESOURCE, NY.

the pavement at the far left, his lance casting a chillingly precise shadow as it rests against steps.

Cossa's fallible snail performs a more understandable but still affecting contrast to the humble, dawning awareness of the Virgin as her body and her ambience are wondrously imbued with divine grace. The evenness and clarity of the light in these paintings is almost wrenching and surreal, emphasizing the degree to which those lacking in faith and pity ignore even the obvious. Mathematical knowledge, exhibited in perspectival exactitude, also contrasts with human ignorance. The cities are voids to be filled, domains to be saved. At least in Cossa's case there is a foreshadowing of Mary's maternal care, for the small child on a balcony in the distance reaches out in a gesture reminiscent of many images showing Christ stretching towards his mother's nurturing breasts, his need for milk one of many signs of his complete humanity.

Our viewpoint is as lowly as the snail's, and must share Mary's wonderment at Gabriel's astounding message. Gesturing in speech and pronouncing with open mouth, the angel conveys the impregnating *logos*, having newly alit on diurnal ground. His spiritual nature is indicated by wings and the pristine sole that has never before touched earth, as though his state is not fully embodied. The tip of that well-stitched, scrupulously drawn leather shoe abuts the panel's threshold, like the snail accentuating the viewer's liminal position, imaginatively lured into the scene while somatically hovering at its edge.[34] This Gabriel is rare for arriving at an oblique angle rather than in strict profile, implicitly traveling through the air above our heads as though everyday time and space almost co-exist with the eternal miracle. Yet the sole of his foot is skewed so that it is almost parallel to the picture plane, in concert with the snail that intently maintains a path along that plane. Snail and sole are simultaneously of three-dimensional ground and two-dimensional surface, of illusionistic space and material wood, creative effect and artist's substance. The proximity of apparent opposites challenges devotees to remember, amidst the panoply of banal details and concerns, the promise of salvation and the immanence of judgment, and to witness the marvels of the word-made-flesh and of Eucharistic transubstantiation at the altar. The consubstantiation of the

34 The infra-red view of the underdrawing is reproduced in Oberer in Weber, *Il trionfo di Bacco*, 84, fig. 1.1. For a similar dynamic in Lorenzo Lotto's *Penitent St Jerome* in Bucharest, featuring an overlarge locust on the edge of the original *barbe*, see Mauro Lucco's entry in *Lorenzo Lotto: Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, 1997), 102–4, no. 10, which informed Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 48–50.

Trinity is pictorialized by God the Father and the Holy Dove at the moment when Christ enters Mary's womb, affirmed by God's triangular halo.[35]

Theological truths and Eucharistic rituals bring godly presence into mundane materiality, and that core Catholic paradox is at the heart of Cossa's visual strategies. The architectural space in the foreground houses both Gabriel and the snail, a heavenly messenger alongside the lowest of earthly creatures. It is an indeterminate but highly lit forecourt, seemingly open to the almost noonday skies yet anchored by a sturdy column supporting a massive stone beam that seems to project out beyond the picture plane. Kneeling below so that the beam's decorated underside is visible above, the viewer is illusionistically incorporated within the space that hosts the advent of the new era of grace. While the snail and Gabriel's sole underscore the edge of the picture plane, the continuation of light and stone beam into the viewer's space, accompanied by Gabriel's flight through that space, in one sense extends the counter illusion of seamless reality. But in another sense this salience accentuates the inevitable rupture between real, depicted and Biblical provinces, differences enhanced by the fact that the altarpiece is relatively small and thus the view is distant. The trite characterization in modern discourse of the Renaissance painting as a transparent "window" onto reality has no logic here. Architecture and perspective simultaneously enwrap the viewer into the central Christian doctrine of salvation while making it clear that God enacted the impossible.

Akin to the way in which the divinely abstract came to imbue the humanly tangible, Cossa's pictorial fabrication goes beyond the parameters of feasibility, constructing an ideal city in which incomprehensible spatial transitions are carefully hidden, depicting a perfect, modest woman whose bedroom nevertheless exists in a public arcade, and imagining a winged angel strangely wearing a theatrical prop. Languid daily life continues: two travellers (anachronistic monks?) approach the city gate, a lone dog roams the empty piazza, and a child and its mother or nurse appear at a balcony, child-proofed by incongruous pine boards filling the gaps between the carved stone columns of the balustrade. Yet into the midst of this humdrum harmony burst Gabriel and the Trinity. To notice such contradictions is not to critique the skilful painter but to be spurred to contemplate the paradoxical miracles of the faith shared by artist, priest, patron and devotee.

Arasse has pointed to the virtuosity of perspective in Cossa's altarpiece, including the placement of the central column that in an obvious sense partly blocks sight lines between Gabriel and Mary and in a compositional sense

35 On the halo see Rebecca Zorach, *The Passionate Triangle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 51–54, 66–67.

forces the vanishing point to the surface rather than allowing it to regress into the distance. Notwithstanding his scoffing at iconography, that column for Arasse is self-evidently a symbol of divinity, both Father and Son, as it is for him in many other pictures of the Annunciation.[36] But this unproven claim is far outweighed by the visual effect of such structural elements. An actual or fictive column often separates the two chief protagonists in Annunciation scenes, their location either side of a pivotal partition accentuating their existence in separate worlds and making all the more astonishing the contravention of the liminal limit when human Mary becomes mother of God.[37] Filippo Lippi's salient column in the San Lorenzo *Annunciation* (c. 1438–40) (Fig. 14.6), for instance, appears equivalent to what is now the actual frame and in this rare case Gabriel is depicted behind the column, largely within the Virgin's realm, a striking visual contravention and lack of decorum that brings home the unsettling nature of breaching a virginity that nevertheless remains intact. The usual effect of segregation appears in other compositional divides too, such as Mary's seclusion in the enclosure of a loggia or bedroom marked by columns rather than walls at the entry area so that the foremost column marks the threshold (which is largely true in Cossa's altarpiece).[38] At other times, actual windows or archways or fictive arches, arcades or doorways assert the monumental divide. As with arcades tunnelling into the distance between the angel and Mary, all these separations equally suggest the potential for traversal because solid walls are absent and the threshold is prominent. Central to the meaning of the Incarnation, liminality and paradox are conveyed in compositional more than iconographic mode.

Arasse sees Gabriel illusionistically touching that column/God, but the shadow on the pavement counteracts this compression of space, as does the effective diagonal of address.[39] Gabriel's gesture of an extended arm with fingers raised is the familiar sign of speech used by preachers and rhetoricians,

36 Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 35–37. No texts are cited for the column's symbolism. In Arasse, *Annonciation*, 203 the column is "une figure du Christ."

37 Examples before Cossa's altarpiece include Masolino's panel in the National Gallery of Art, DC (Arasse, *Annonciation*, fig. 2), Piero della Francesca's fresco in S. Francesco, Arezzo (fig. 21), Fra Angelico's fresco in the corridor of S. Marco (fig. 73), Giuliano da Maiano's intarsia in the sacristy of the Florentine cathedral (fig. 97) and Jacopo Bellini's altarpiece in Brescia (fig. 190). See also his figs. 34, 36, 48, 59, 77, 78, 101–2, 114.

38 For example, Mary stands in a loggia behind four columns in Domenico Veneziano's predella scene of the *Annunciation*, now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge: Arasse, *Annonciation*, fig. 15.

39 Arasse, *Annonciation*, 203; Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 37.

FIGURE 14.6 *Filippo Lippi*, The Annunciation, *c. 1438–40. San Lorenzo, Florence.* PHOTO: SCALA / ART RESOURCE, NY.

and the advent of the *logos* is further accentuated by perspectival composition. The vanishing point, according to Arasse and a diagram he provides from the architect Loïc Richalet, is located in the middle of the column at the level

of Gabriel's right elbow.[40] However, it is actually higher, close to the tip of Gabriel's 'speaking' fingers if one takes into account the oblique angle of view for a kneeling devotee or priest looking up at the panel raised above the altar on its predella. Also missed by the diagram is the intersection of the dove's trajectory with the finger's tip. The mathematics resulting from a paper diagram drawn on the basis of a photograph shot direct-on must be corrected by attention to physical context, the materiality of optical engagement, and ruminations on meaningful effect. In this case, rather than leading to a point 'vanishing' far into the distance, many lines subliminally lure the eye to sound, to the foregrounded utterance that draws eternity into the surface of the present.

Cossa's paradoxical yet apparently seamless combination of surface, salience and depth is typical of the naturalism of fifteenth-century painting, which conveys abstract knowledge in particularized form, like preacher's anecdotes, allegorized mythology, painted chronicles or scientific diagrams. It was self-evident that representation was a matter of skilful imagination rather than reflective of reality, especially when many Biblical scenes, like Cossa's, were visualized in contemporary settings and with familiar rather than historically accurate details like costume and architectural vocabulary. Although Arasse argued that the major insight offered by Cossa's panel is that it does not represent Nazareth over 1500 years ago because it is a work of art rather than a record of reality, that understanding was widespread.[41] The early fourteenth-century *Meditations on the Life of Christ* by Pseudo-Bonaventura and the *Garden of Prayer*, also written by a Franciscan (Nicolò da Osimo, before he died in 1453), for example, advised contemplation and memorization through a process of vivification and personal identification. "Fix the places and people in your mind . . . taking for this purpose a city that is well known to you," and take "people well-known to you, to represent for you the people involved in the Passion."[42] This standard technique of contemplation would have been practiced at the foot of the altarpiece, empowered by Cossa's vision.

---

40 Arasse, *Annonciation*, 199 and fig. 18 (noting that Richaelet's point is lower than expected, but unable to suggest the reason); Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 37.

41 Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 45.

42 Nicolò da Osimo, *Zardino de oration fructuoso* (Venice: Bernardino Benali, 1494), in Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 46, 163–64. Many manuscript copies survive and it was printed three times in the 1470s: Umberto Picciafuoco, *Fr. Nicolò da Osimo* (Monteprandone: Officine Grafiche Anxanum, 1980), 103–7.

Indeed, Gabriel wears fifteenth-century garb, his halo is held in place by a metal apparatus wrapped around his hair, and he may be genuflecting in a space reminiscent of a church tramezzo where religious plays were often staged. Church-goers and Renaissance viewers in general were used to suspending disbelief while enhancing their faith. But they were not naïve, understanding the difference between visual representation and the Biblical reality of their faith. During his time in Florence for a Church council in 1439, the Russian Bishop Abraham of Suzdal attended a performance of the Annunciation, and his admiration of the play was enhanced rather than marred by his comprehension of the staging craft, including the wearing by four prophets of "golden haloes . . . fitted to each of their heads."[43] Familiar as both attribute and stage prop, Cossa's contraption is arresting in its contemporaneity and disruption of the seamless fiction of timeless narrative. Like the snail, it impels the pious to ponder theological mysteries such as St. Bernardino's understanding that the Incarnation involved the coming of the "impalpable in the tangible."[44]

The snail is just one instance of the astute blend of punctilious naturalism and cerebral artifice that distinguishes fifteenth-century painting. Whereas the standard history of art emphasizes naturalism in Renaissance art and recognizes artfulness chiefly in necessarily deceitful perspective, many practitioners of the time saw art in subtle opposition to nature or, rather, as capable of perspicacity that went beyond surface appearances. As Cennino Cennini's handbook for painters put it around 1400: a painting "calls for imagination, and skill of hand, in order to discover things not seen, hiding themselves under the shadow of natural objects, . . . presenting to plain sight what does not actually exist."[45] Several decades later, Filippo Brunelleschi, goldsmith, architect and experimenter with perspective, opined that the artist "discovers that which nature hides."[46] "The mind of the painter," said Leonardo da Vinci toward the end of the century, had "to transform itself into the very mind of nature,

43 For the Russian, with Latin translation, see Joannes Krajcar, ed., *Acta Slavica Concilii Florentini. Narrationes et documenta* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1976), 115 (*Concilium Florentinum. Documenta et Scriptores*, vol. XI). I have used the English translation of Nerida Newbigin, *Feste d'Oltrano. Plays in Churches in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1996), vol. 1, 4–5.

44 The passage is quoted at greater length below, at n. 52.

45 Cennino Cennini, *The Craftsman's Handbook. "Il Libro dell'Arte,"* trans. Daniel Thompson, Jr. (New York: Dover, 1960), 1–2.

46 Frank Prager and Gustina Scaglia, *Brunelleschi: Studies of his technology and inventions* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970), 118, 144.

to become an interpreter between nature and art."[47] Notably, Leon Battista Alberti's citation in 1435 of Narcissus as the inventor of painting involved not only illusionistic naturalism but also the embracing of the superficial mirror image "with art" (*con arte*).[48]

Interpretation and *arte* were crucial in picturing the invisible. As suggested by his title *On Learned Ignorance*, written in 1440, the theologian and Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa believed that "we know of the truth only that we know that it *cannot* be comprehended precisely as it is," and hence he wrote of the "coincidence of opposites" rather than a simple continuum between metaphorical and real, divine and human spheres.[49] In a letter to Cardinal Nicholas Albergati in 1463, he observed: "in this world we walk in the way of metaphors and enigmatic images, because the spirit of truth is not of this world and can be grasped by us only in so far as metaphors and symbols which we recognize as such carry us onward to that which is not known."[50] His core sense of the coincidence of opposites (*coincidentia oppositorum*) could be likened to a perfect or transcendent vanishing point, the focus of insight that led him to "embrace incomprehensibles incomprehensibly in learned ignorance, by transcending those incorruptible truths that can be humanly known."[51]

In simpler and more vivid terms, St Bernardino of Siena proposed the same paradoxical understanding in one of his Latin sermons, written for Franciscan readers rather than the vernacular-reading or listening public. The moment of the Incarnation was the coming of "eternity into time, immensity in measure, the Creator in the creature, God in man, life in death, . . . the incorruptible in the corruptible, the unrepresentable in the figure, the unutterable in discourse, the inexplicable in speech, the uncircumscribable in place, the invisible in vision, the inaudible in sound . . . the impalpable in the tangible, the lord in the slave. . . ."[52] Cited by Arasse, Bernardino's notion of divine contradiction

47 Robert Klein and Henri Zerner, *Italian Art 1500–1600* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 7.

48 For the Italian and Latin in parallel, see Rocco Sinisgalli, *Il Nuovo "De Pictura" di Leon Battista Alberti* (Rome: Edizioni Kappa, 2006), 162 (2.26: "abracciare con arte quella ivi supreficie del fonte").

49 *On Learned Ignorance* 1.4, in Nicholas of Cusa, *Selected Spiritual Writings*, trans. H. Lawrence Bond (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 91. He began to develop the idea in sermons delivered in the winter of 1438–39 (21).

50 Quoted in Hellmut Wohl, *The Paintings of Domenico Veneziano ca.1410–1461* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1980), 54.

51 Nicholas of Cusa, *Selected Writings*, 20.

52 Paraphrased in Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 54, the passage is given in French in Arasse, *Annonciation*, 11–12, from the Italian translation in Bernardino da Siena, *Pagine scelte*,

may well have been articulated when he visited Bologna in 1440, at which time a Franciscan confraternity dedicated to the Annunciation renamed itself Buon Gesù, after his Christological devotion.[53] Three or so decades later, the preacher's view may have had an impact on Cossa's altarpiece. But it was a commonplace idea, held by religious intellectuals like Cusa and secular men too. For instance, Coluccio Salutati, Chancellor of Florence for over thirty years (1375–1406), believed that "one enters into understanding and knowledge of spiritual things through the medium of sensible things," a theory graspable by all artists, and by viewers following standard procedures of contemplation and prayer.[54]

In many ways, I agree with Arasse's findings about the snail, although he seems to be inconsistent, often thinking of it as purely on the surface as though it mimics Clement Greenberg's flatness of modernity, but at other moments recognizing its important place "in-between the spectator and the painting."[55] He likens the snail to the glass vase at the forefront of Lippi's *Annunciation* (Fig. 14.6), overlooking, however, the transitional space established in that altarpiece by a ledge preceding the vessel, whereas Cossa's snail is deliberately abrupt.[56] Overall, Arasse's essay reaffirms a structuralist division between iconography and form, with the latter too close to modernist "art for art's sake," exacerbated by too unremitting a focus on perspective, which is taken as 'pure' in a modernist sense.

Rather than a puzzling exception, the snail is like Gabriel's sole, the salient beam, and the 'vanishing' point at the moment of speech, for all highlight the nearness of the pictorial realm and the immanence yet incomprehensibility of the divine. The snail situated parallel to the picture plane atop the *barbe* is literally liminal, resting on two different existential planes, of actual paint/frame and fabricated pavement, so that materiality and representation seem to merge, just as contemporaneous setting (both depicted and actual) blends with universal history at the moment when the humanly physical and the

(ed.) Dionisio Pacetti (Milan, 1950), 54. For the Latin, see *De triplici Christi nativitate*, in St. Bernardino of Siena, *Opera omnia*, (ed.) Pacifici Perantoni et al., vol. 7 (Florence: Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1959), 31–49.

53 Luigi Dima, "L'Osservanza a Bologna, 1220–2009," in *L'Osservanza di Bologna. Convento e chiesa di San Paolo in Monte*, (eds.) Donatella Biagi Maino and Giulia Gandolfi (Bologna: Fondazione del Monte, 2009), 28.

54 Baxandall, *Painting and Experience*, 42.

55 Arasse, *Annonciation*, 206.

56 Loc.cit.; Arasse, *On n'y voit rien*, 43–44, 48.

divinely immaterial combine at the Incarnation. The modernist plane is countered by illusionistic salience, deceptive perspective and dialectical liminality.

Arasse's most perceptive, historically grounded insight is due to his rare reference to a fifteenth-century text, Bernardino's sermon. Although not developed, the few sentences from that sermon enable Arasse to open up the possibility of meaningful paradox, of the way in which motifs like the snail could signal not only artistic self-consciousness but also engage with the function of an altarpiece and the way in which historical meaning can be subtly conveyed visually. The snail on the limit of the painting points to "the limits of representation," as Arasse insists, but so too does it point to the limits of mortality and the inadequate yet necessary ways in which we might comprehend divinity.[57] The altarpiece is more than an object in the modernist discourse about the arbitrariness of aestheticized art. Cusa's sense of the simultaneity of opposites gets us beyond limits and into the realm of permeable liminality, closer to the miraculous possibilities of the divine and to an artist's capacity to celebrate Incarnate creation. The implausibility of representation is balanced by the truth of the miraculous.

References

Works Published before 1800

Valeriani, Joannis Pierii. 1685. *Hieroglyphica*. Cologne.

Works Published after 1800

Aikema, Bernard, and Beverly Louise Brown (eds.). 2000. *Renaissance Venice and the North.* New York: Rizzoli.

Albertus Magnus. *De Laudibus*. 1898. In *Opera Omnia.* (Ed.) by Auguste Borgnet. Vol. 36. Paris: Vivès.

Angelini, Alessandro. 1982. Pietro Orioli e il momento "urbinate" della pittura senese del Quattrocento. *Prospettiva* 30: 30–43.

Arasse, Daniel. 1999. *L'Annonciation italienne. Une histoire de perspective*. Paris: Hazan.

———. 2000. *On n'y voit rien: descriptions.* Paris: Denoël.

Baxandall, Michael. 1988. *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bellosi, Luciano (ed.). 1993. *Francesco di Giorgio e il Rinascimento a Siena 1450–1500.* Milan: Electa.

57 Ibid., 46.

Biagi Maino, Donatella and Giulia Gandolfi (ed.). 2009. *L'Osservanza di Bologna. Convento e chiesa di San Paolo in Monte*. Bologna: Fondazionedel Monte.

Binski, Paul and Patrick Zutshi. 2011. *Western Illuminated Manuscripts: A Catalogue of the Collection in Cambridge University Library.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cennini, Cennino. 1960. *The Craftsman's Handbook. "Il Libro dell'Arte."* Trans. by Daniel Thompson, Jr. New York: Dover.

Dolfuss, Marc-Adrien. 1978–79. Les mollusques terrestres dans l'art et archéologie. *Bulletin de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France*, 30–39.

Eliade, Mircea. 1991. *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism.* Trans. by Philip Mairet. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

———. 1952. *Images et symbols. Essais sur le symbolism magico-religieux.* Paris: Gallimard.

Ettlinger, Helen. 1978. The Virgin Snail. *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 41: 316.

Fasciculus Morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher's Handbook. 1989. Trans. by Siegfried Wenzel. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Ferguson, George. 1961. *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fraschetti, Stella. 1990. Antonio di Neri Barili (Siena, 1453–1516). In *Domenico Beccafumi e il suo tempo*, 548–51. Milan: Electa.

Friedmann, Herbert. 1980. *A Bestiary for Saint Jerome: Animal Symbolism in European Religious Art*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Hesiod. *Works and Days.* 1936. Trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn-White. Rev. ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hugh of Saint Victor. 1854. *De Beatiis.* In *Patrologiae cursus completus: series latina.* (Ed.) by Jacques P. Migne. Vol. 177. Paris.

Humfrey, Peter. 2007. *Titian: The Complete Paintings.* Ghent: Ludion.

Passerini, Guiseppe Lando (ed.). 1919. *I fioretti del glorioso Messere Santo Francesco e de' suoi fratelli.* 2nd ed. Florence: Sansoni.

Isidore of Seville. 2006. *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. Trans. by Stephen A. Barney. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jones, Malcolm. 2002. *The Secret Middle Ages*. Phoenix Mill: Sutton.

Klein, Robert and Henri Zerner. 1966. *Italian Art 1500–1600.* Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Krajcar, Joannes (ed.). 1976. *Acta Slavica Concilii Florentini. Narrationes et documenta* (*Concilium Florentinum. Documenta et Scriptores*, vol. XI). Rome: Pontificium Institutum Orientalium Studiorum.

Kreytenberg, Gert. 1994. *Orcagna's Tabernacle in Orsanmichele.* New York: Harry N. Abrams.

Leopardi, Liliana. 2007. Aesthetic hybrids: interpreting Carlo Crivelli's ornamental style. PhD diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University.

Lightbown, Ronald. 2004. *Carlo Crivelli*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lucco, Mauro. 1997. Entry in *Lorenzo Lotto: Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance*. National Gallery of Art, Washington.

Marquand, Allan. 1920. *Giovanni della Robbia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Monnas, Lisa. 2008. *Merchants, Princes and Painters: Silk Fabrics in Italian and Northern Paintings 1300–1550.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Natale, Mauro (ed.). 2007. *Cosmè Tura e Francesco del Cossa: l'arte a Ferrara nell'età di Borso d'Este.* Ferrara: Ferrara Arte.

Newbigin, Nerida. 1996. *Feste d'Oltrano. Plays in Churches in Fifteenth-Century Florence.* 2 vols. Florence: Leo S. Olschki.

Nicholas of Cusa. 1997. *Nicholas of Cusa. Selected Spiritual Writings.* Trans. by H. Lawrence Bond. New York: Paulist Press.

Oberer, Angela. 2002. Catalogue entries in *Il trionfo di Bacco. Capolavori della scuola ferrarese a Dresda 1480–1620*, (ed.) Gregor J. M. Weber, 83–88. Turin: Umberto Allemandi.

Picciafuoco, Umberto. 1980. *Fr. Nicolò da Osimo*. Monteprandone: Officine Grafiche Anxanum.

Pinon, Roger. 1978. La polysémie symbolique de la limace et de l'escargot dans le langage en Occident. In *Mélanges de Philologie Romane offerts à Charles Camproux*. Vol. II, 1055–73. Montpellier: C.E.O.

Prager, Frank, and Gustina Scaglia. 1970. *Brunelleschi: Studies of his technology and inventions*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Pseudo-Bonaventura. 1961. *Meditations on the Life of Christ: An Illustrated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century.* (Eds.) and trans. Isa Ragusa and Rosalie Green. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Randall, Lillian. 1962. The Snail in Gothic Marginal Warfare. *Speculum* 37: 358–67.

Ravanelli Guidotti, Carmen. 1988. *Il pavimento della cappella Vaselli in San Petronio a Bologna*. Bologna: Grafis.

Schreiber, Wilhelm Ludwig (ed.). 1910. *"Defensorium in violatae virginitatis Mariae" aus der Druckerei der Hurus in Saragossa in Faksimile-Reproduktion*. Weimar: Gesellschaft der Bibliophilen.

Sgarbi, Vittorio. 2003. *Francesco del Cossa*. Milan and Geneva: Rizzoli/Skira.

Sinisgalli, Rocco. 2006. *Il Nuovo "De Pictura" di Leon Battista Alberti*. Rome: Edizioni Kappa.

St. Bernardino of Siena. 1959. *Opera Omnia.* (Ed.) by Pacifici Perantoni et al. Vol. 7. Florence: Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae.

Strauss, Walter. 1974. *The Complete Drawings of Albrecht Dürer*. New York: Abaris Books.

Torriti, Piero. 1977. *La Pinacoteca nazionale di Siena: I dipinti dal XII al XV secolo.* Genoa: Sagep.

Werness, Hope. 2004. *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Animal Symbolism in Art*. New York: Continuum.

Wohl, Hellmut. 1980. *The Paintings of Domenico Veneziano ca. 1410–1461.* Oxford: Phaidon.

Zambrano, Patricia and Jonathan Katz Nelson. 2004. *Filippino Lippi*. Milan: Electa.

Zervas, Diane (ed.). 1996. *Orsanmichele a Firenze / Orsanmichele Florence*. 2 vols. Modena: Panini.

Zorach, Rebecca. 2011. *The Passionate Triangle*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

CHAPTER 15

Luther Relics

Lyndal Roper

The prize for the oddest Luther relic must surely go to the 'Luther Flea'. Carefully preserved in the archive in Altenburg, the late nineteenth-century scholar who discovered it could give it a precise date: 5 April 1525, for the mummified flea was stuck between the pages of Luther's handwritten manuscript.[1] This was a portentous moment, at the height of the Peasants' War when it seemed that all Germany might be overrun by rebels, and when Luther would shortly call for the rebellious peasants to be stabbed and slain by the princes.

Was the flea a Luther relic, a curiosity, or even a joke? We will never know for sure. Any scholar capable of reading Luther's hand in manuscript would have been familiar enough with sixteenth-century German literary culture to be reminded of Johann Fischart's flea poem, a rhyming semi-pornographic tour de force which imagines the progress of a flea around women's bodies.[2] (Fischart went on to translate Rabelais for German readers.) Or perhaps the find recalled the reformer's famous challenge to Erasmus in "The Bondage of the Will" to "Take a single flea or louse . . . and if, after combining all the powers and concentrating all the efforts both of your god and all your supporters, you succeed in killing it in the name and by the power of free choice, you shall be the victors."[3]

The flea is about as close to the body as one can get, a 'relic' in the sense that it offers the owner a connection (of a kind) to the physical Doctor Luther. But its indecency—by definition fleas get under the clothes—suggests that this is

1 Harald Meller, (ed.), *Fundsache Luther. Archäologen auf den Spuren des Reformators* (Stuttgart: Theiss Verlag, 2008), 320, 322. This catalogue of the recent superb exhibition also included an excellent collection of the most important 'Luther relics', and this essay is greatly indebted both to it and to the permanent exhibition in the Lutherhalle Wittenberg, which pays particular attention to the image of Luther in subsequent generations. I would like to thank in particular Dr Andreas Stahl of the Landesdenkmalamt Halle; and also Petra Wittig and Jutta Strehle of the Lutherhalle Wittenberg; Dominik Collet, Nick Stargardt, Alex Walsham, and the members of the early modern Workshop at Oxford.

2 Johann Fischart, *Flöh Hatz, Weiber Tratz*, (ed.) Alois Haas (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1967).

3 *Luther's Works*, (eds.) Jaroslav Pelikan, Oswald Hilton et al., 55 vols (St Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and Fortress, 1955–) (hereafter cited as LW), vol. 33, 75; *Luthers Werke*, (ed.) J. F. K. Knaake et al. (Weimar: Böhlau, 1883–) (hereafter cited as WA), vol. 18, 643.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_017

not a relic in the conventional sense. And there is a fine irony in the moment that the flea immortalizes: Luther, the Reformation hero, will soon write the piece that will forever align him with the princes, yet here he is, subjected to the same itch as any peasant. In this essay I want to explore how people in the sixteenth century and beyond dealt with objects associated with Luther. Did they create a quasi-saint's cult out of Luther? Or—as is the case with the flea relic—is there something altogether too physical in these Luther relics for them ever to work as straightforward devotional objects?

A relic is a material object which relates to a particular person, event or place. Typically an object becomes a relic only after the death of the person to whom it is attached, and often it is believed that certain powers of that individual are transferred to the relic and inhere within it. Commonly, relics are fragments, parts of something that has been attached to the holy person or object, so they multiply the locations of the sacred and enable the divine to travel. Physicality is extremely important: objects associated with the body, clothing, or even parts of the body itself are prime candidates for becoming relics. Pre-reformation culture had used relics as a powerful form of devotion, especially in relation to saints. Intimately connected with healing, they were also tied to salvation: viewing particular relics could get you time off purgatory. It was Frederick the Wise's huge relics collection which remained a thorn in the side of the reformers (and it was no accident that the 95 Theses were probably posted on the eve of All Saints Day, when the relics collection went on display and gave indulgences to the viewers).[4]

The cultural battle ignited by the Reformation put the issue of relics centre stage, because Luther and Lutherans rejected devotions to the saints, masses and purgatory—and relics were crucial to all of these. Like many devout Catholics, Luther could poke fun at relics, like the head of St John the Baptist (certainly burnt by the Saracens),[5] the Virgin's milk[6] or the fabled "chamber pots of eleven thousand virgins"[7]—but he also saw them as sinister, inherently

4 There is on-going debate about whether or not the 95 Theses were actually posted. See most recently Volker Leppin, *Martin Luther* (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 2006), 125–6; Joachim Ott and Martin Treu, *Luthers Thesenanschlag—Faktum oder Fiktion* (Leipzig: Evangelischer Verlagsanstalt, 2008). The theses were certainly sent by letter to Albrecht of Mainz on October 31.

5 LW, vol. 54 (Table Talk), 131, no. 1272; WA (Tischreden; hereafter cited as TR) vol. 2, 21, no. 1272.

6 LW vol. 54, 247, no. 3637b; WA TR vol. 3, 472, no. 3637 b.

7 The chamber pots were a joke made by a pious Catholic which Luther recounted. LW vol. 54, 273, no. 3785; WA TR vol. 3, 612, no. 3785.

linked to "papal lies" and the foundations of papal power. Condemning the "innovations" of the papal church in his 1541 polemic "Against Hanswurst", he typically lumped together "purgatory, relics, consecration of churches, swarms of decrees and decretals, and many more countless books full of vain, new inventions." They excited his crudest sexual-cum-scatological invective: branding them "dirt or filth, indeed, poison, and . . . devilish lies", he describes how, before the Reformation, he and pious Christians were stuck in "that vile hole", "the behind of this hellish whore, this new church of the pope".[8]

The Lutheran reformation certainly attacked relics with vigour. But it did not entirely abolish them in the broader sense of the term. After all, a relic in this wider sense does not necessarily have to possess curative or salvific powers. As I shall argue, a relic can be an object which simply commemorates an individual, place or event. This is not to say that it lacks emotional power. Precisely because it relates to an individual it can foster a very strong engagement of feeling with him or her. In this broader sense, the Lutheran Reformation certainly did not give up relics (and indeed Luther continued to hold that Christ was really present in the elements of the Eucharist though it was not a relic): medieval relic devotion, of course, depended on the idea that the divine could be present in things. Part of the cultural transition that the Reformation entailed was a transformation in what relics meant and how they could be used.

Luther 'Relics'

For the Luther enthusiast, there is an impressive array of Luther paraphernalia. There are several cassocks, some rings, his chair, the apocryphal ink stain on the wall of the Wartburg room where he threw ink at the Devil, there is the Luther bed; there are Luther beakers, mugs and bier steins. These relics spawned their own mini-relics: the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg boasts a tiny fragment of cloth supposedly once part of Luther's gown, just like the scraps of cloth torn from saints' garments to use for their healing powers.[9] By

8 LW vol. 41 "Against Hans Wurst", 205, 206; WA vol. 51: 498, 499.

9 G. Ulrich Grossmann (ed.), *Faszination Meisterwerk—Dürer—Rembrandt—Riemenschneider* (Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum Verlag, 2004), 78–9: the packaging is probably eighteenth century but we do not know of what collection it originally formed part: it passed to the Germanisches Nationalmuseum from the university library of Erlangen in 1942. Another similar fragment formed part of the collection of Duke August of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (1579–1666), founder of the Wolfenbüttel Library: Meller, *Fundsache Luther*,

now, if not before, the Reformation historian smells a rat: in the sixteenth century, it was widely believed that clothes were infused with the power of their owners, which is why those engaging in love magic sought to gain a piece of the beloved's clothes, while clothes were actually torn from the bodies of dead saints to be used for their curative powers.[10] How could this be possible in the case of a reformer who broke decisively with the cult of the saints, and mocked the idea of saints' relics and their imputed powers as magic and superstition? Significantly, there are a fair number of 'false' relics, testifying to the need for material mementos of the reformer: there is Luther's 'inkpot', made in the seventeenth century out of an old cannon ball (the monastery where Luther lived was a munitions depot for a time), or the 'Luther glass' whose form betrays it as a manufacture of the eighteenth century.[11]

These relics also became the foci for early Lutheran tourism, creating Protestant pilgrimage routes. The process began as early as Luther's death. The reformer's body was taken from Eisleben to Wittenberg, with stops at Lutheran redoubts along the route (the cortege passed through Halle, where Pastor Justus Jonas cannily acquired the death masks of head and hands, which now form the prize exhibit of their Luther museum and qualifies Halle as a Luther tourist site).[12] Visitors went to the Wartburg to see the famous ink stain (which was probably put there in the late seventeenth century),[13] and to Eisleben to view

318, 320 (F23); the Wolfenbüttel library collection of paintings includes a double portrait of the reformer and Katharina von Bora by the Cranach workshop (http://www.hab.de/forschung/projekte/gemaelde-e.htm).

10 See for example Ruth Martin, *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice, 1550–1650* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Wolfgang Behringer, *Mit dem Feuer vom Leben zum Tod. Hexengesetzgebung in Bayern* (Munich: Hugendubel 1988); Guido Ruggiero, *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage, and Power at the End of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1993).

11 Meller (ed.), *Fundsache Luther*, 320, 322 (F29); 315 (F15); Heinrich Nickel, Raphael Pregla, Paul Raabe, and Hildegard Seidel (eds.), *Martin Luther und Halle. Kabinettausstellung der Marienbibliothek und der Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle im Luthergedenkjahr 1996* (Halle: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1996), catalogue nos 31–2.

12 See Wolfgang Hoffmann, *Luther. Ein praktischer Reiseführer zu den bedeutendsten Wirkungsstätten des Reformators in Deutschland* (Wernigerode: Schmidt, 1996), 102–6; in 1663, the death mask was used to create a life-like Luther figure with movable arms and legs who sat on display at a table with the Bible: Arno Sames, "Martin Luther und die Reformation in Halle", in Nickel, Pregla, Raabe, and Seidel, *Martin Luther und Halle*, 7–12, 12; and catalogue nos 32–4; there is even an etching of the figure from 1736.

13 Goetz mentions the existence of a Luther museum at the Wartburg. Georg Henricus Goetz, *De Reliquiis Lutheri, Diversis in locis asservatis, singularia* (Leipzig: Christian Emmerich, 1703), 15–19.

the house where Luther was born. As early as 1583, a picture stood outside the house to mark the place, and the recent discovery of a small mass-produced seventeenth-century pottery swan, Luther's sign, indicates that there was probably a lively trade in souvenirs.[14] This kind of tourism could involve intense emotional identification, though not all pious visitors took contact with the reformer to the lengths of one seventeenth-century Lutheran enthusiast, who spent the night in Luther's Magdeburg bed.[15] An early nineteenth-century souvenir picture offers a particularly strange example of the intersection between relic and tourism: around a conventional tourist image of Luther's birth-house in Eisleben, three Luther relics—a piece of Luther's tablecloth in Eisleben, a fragment from a writing implement from the Luther cell in Erfurt, and a splinter of wood from his 'Familientafel' in the Wartburg—are displayed in tiny glass cases, like medieval monstrances where relics are visible through clear panels.[16] And yet the design owes as much to the nineteenth-century tourist industry which produced the views of Eisleben, or to the glass case aesthetic of the museum, as it does to medieval devotion. It is a domestic object, not a holy treasure to be kept in a church.

Luther relics were also associated with miraculous tales. In 1689, when the whole of Eisleben burnt to the ground, the reformer's birth-house along with it, the picture of Luther dating from 1583 which stood outside the house survived the flames unscathed.[17] (In fact, as the tourist office is now careful to explain, the picture had been taken down shortly before the fire.) Like a saint's relics, it would seem, objects associated with Luther took on his sacred power and demonstrated they were genuine by performing miracles, just as saints' relics did; before the conflagration of 1689, Luther's birth-house had 'miraculously' survived several fires. All this placed them dangerously close to magic. And we know that splinters were routinely taken by tourists from Luther's house: these were souvenirs, but they were also believed to be good against toothache.[18]

Yet the Eisleben picture is not quite a saintly relic, for it did not heal anyone, nor did it relate directly to the reformer himself. Known to have been painted

14 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 325–6 (F 35).

15 Goetz, *De Reliquiis Lutheri*, 10–11.

16 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 321–2 (F 28).

17 See the classic R. W. Scribner, "Incombustible Luther: The Image of the Reformer in Early Modern Germany", in Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: Hambledon, 1987). There is an interestingly similar story about Luther's cell in Magdeburg: when Magdeburg burnt to the ground in 1631, it survived. Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 8.

18 Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 35: Goetz condemned this practice as just as bad as the papists.

long after Luther's death, its only connection to the reformer is that it bears his image and stood outside the house. It is a marker, not a contact relic. Its survival witnessed to the truth of Luther's doctrine rather than performing a miracle.

Indeed, there is also evidence of surprising indifference to the objects that had once surrounded the reformer. When the Augustinian monastery in which he had lived was extended by a further storey, archaeological evidence demonstrates that much of the furnishings were unceremoniously tossed out of the windows—where they have remained to be dug up, now turned into a modern collection of museum 'relics'. And there is a random quality about which places became linked to Luther. Though the birth house in Eisleben early became a mecca for tourists, the *Sterbehaus* in the same town was misidentified, and the wrong house was duly purchased for the nation.[19] Though Eisleben cashed in on Luther early, the home in Mansfeld where Luther actually spent his childhood did not at first become such a tourist site. An early eighteenth-century pamphlet which inventorises the relics does not list Mansfeld at all, mistakenly identifying Eisleben as the place where Luther grew up.[20] When in the nineteenth century, interest grew, the modest building was acquired to show the humble circumstances of Luther's youth. In fact, as recent archaeology has demonstrated, the original sixteenth-century house was twice as large.[21] In these cases, there was no continuous 'Luther cult' but rather a later reinvention of it in which collective 'memory', having been lost, was rewritten to fit the view of Luther as man of the people.

Furthermore, many of the Luther 'relics' are not straightforward relics but are precious in their own right, or commemorate particular occasions: the *Doppelpokal* of pear-tree wood presented to Luther by John the Constant when the Augsburg Confession was signed, the gold and silver drinking cup given to the reformer by the Swedish King Gustav Vasa.[22] Equally striking, many of them are drinking vessels: glasses, mugs, bier steins that celebrate Luther's fondness for German beer, an authentic part of the reformer's image which

19 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 308–10.

20 Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 8.

21 Andreas Stahl, "Baugeschichtliche Erkenntnisse zu Luthers Elternhaus in Mansfeld und seiner Bewohner", in *Martin Luther und Eisleben*, (ed.) Rosemarie Knape (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlangsanstalt, 2007), 353–90: the objects displayed in the exhibition, especially the bones from the Luder family kitchen, demonstrate beyond doubt that the family was wealthy.

22 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 313–4 (F 13); 310–11 (F 7): an inscription on the vessel notes that in 1570, Elector Joachim II of Brandenburg drained it in one go shortly before his death. The reformer's grandson sold it to the Leipzig city Council.

had become widely known through the publication of Luther's *Table Talk* in 1566—it included anecdotes about the 'pass' glasses and the competitive drinking that took place at weddings. There is even a tale about Justus Jonas and drinking where the beaker to which the passage in the *Table Talk* refers to is a still extant 'Luther relic'.[23] All this fitted with the idea of a Germanic, pleasure-loving reformer, who enjoyed conviviality, eating and drinking and could hardly be less like the ascetic saints of yore. And though the Luther cloth fragments look suspiciously like saints' relics, few of his garments have survived. The supposed Luther mass vestment of 1510 is a fluke which has been kept because of its superb embroidery and predates Luther's career as reformer. There is one cassock from the 1520s which may have been the one presented to him by the town Council, but there was no systematic attempt to collect clothes from which cloth relics could be made.[24] The Russian Duchess of Weimar, Maria Pawlowna (1786–1859), acquired one such Luther cassock—she also collected Goethe's court frock-coat—but this was part of the cult of great men, not a saintly relic cult.[25] Many of the most egregious Luther relics date from the nineteenth, not the sixteenth century, when a different attitude to the culture of objects ensured there was no danger they would be read as relics.[26]

Revealing, too, is the ownership of what we might term the 'contact' relics, objects which were directly connected with Luther's body. Some passed down through pious Lutheran families, usually pastors. But the ring given to Luther by the Elector when he achieved his doctorate was returned to the Saxon ruling house after Luther's death, where it eventually passed to August the Strong who gave it in turn to Duke Rudolf August of Braunschweig-Lüneburg. Luther's signet ring, given to him in 1530 by Elector Johann Friedrich, ended up in the Grünes Gewölbe in Dresden, one of the treasures of the Saxon house; while a so-called 'engagement ring of Luther's' (probably in fact from the

23 For genuine Luther-related 'pass glasses', Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 263–5 (E72, 73, 74, 76); for many examples of commemorative drinking vessels, 310–19; the Jonas Glas: 314 (F14). Goetz mentions Luther-Pokale he had seen in Altenburg, Leipzig and Nuremberg, along with the glass out of which he drank with Spalatin, the Swedish silver cup on display at Leipzig and the Jonas glass in Nuremberg, Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 24.

24 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 220–1 (D1); 224–5 (D8).

25 Volkmar Joestel, (ed.), *Luthers Schatzkammer. Kostbarkeiten im Lutherhaus Wittenberg*, (Dössel: Stekovics Verlag, 2008), 42–3.

26 See for example the nineteenth-century cult of the Luther 'beech' near Altenstein in Thuringia. When it fell victim to a hurricane in 1841 the wood was carefully salvaged and reserved for the fabrication of Luther souvenirs: from walking sticks to serviette rings; and even the leaves of 'Luther trees' have been sold: Jöstel and Strehle, *Luthers Bild*, 45–6.

late sixteenth or early seventeenth century) was also in Duke Rudolf August of Branschweig-Lüneburg's collection, presented to him by the Polish king in 1703.[27] And, rather morbidly for modern tastes, a piece of the very chair on which Luther had died at Eisleben was kept in one of the Saxon ducal cabinets of curiosities.[28] These rulers acquired Luther relics in order to demonstrate their Lutheran credentials; they were not intended to function as saints' relics and could not do so, since they were not publicly accessible.

Certainly there is evidence of considerable edginess amongst Lutherans about relics. Duke Johann Wilhelm of Saxony, for instance, wanted to have it clearly stated on the monument in Jena that the gigantic bronze tomb plate with a life-size Luther was intended to remember the reformer, not to honour him as a saint.[29] In Wittenberg itself, any potential 'relics problem' was forestalled by the fact that his family sold the house to the university, which could control the memorabilia: by contrast, the relics industry at Eisleben could thrive, because it was not under the beady eyes of the Wittenberg theologians; and after the town burnt down in 1689, the Luther house was reopened as a civic monument, owned by the town.[30] By the seventeenth century at least, relics were well on the way to becoming souvenirs. So are the relics nothing more than unauthorized perversions of the Lutheran message?

---

27 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 228, 230 (D14) (doctor's ring); 234–5 (E1: signet ring: see also on this ring, or possibly another, Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 19–20: one pious owner wore it as her sole ring, having laid aside all rings during her final illness. She wound silk around her finger which had grown too thin for the ring, while with her other hand she would press the ring to remind herself of the reformer); 238–9 (E8). The signet ring was, according to Goetz, worn by the Saxon Elector who was given it by the reformer's great- grandson. In these cases, it is significant that the objects were worn by members of the ruling houses, not kept on display: they functioned as a personal badge of closeness to Luther and of confessional identity. In 1702 Duke Rudolph of Braunschweig-Lüneburg presented the 'doctor-ring' and the 'wedding ring' of Katharina von Bora to the University of Helmstedt: I am very grateful to Dr Michael Wenzel of the Wolfenbüttel Library for this information.

28 "Catalogus von allerhand Natur und und [sic] Kunstsachen." Thüringischen Staatsarchiv Gotha (ThStA Gotha). Signatur: Geheimes Archiv, E XI Nr. 52, fol. 264 verso. I am grateful to Dominik Collet for this reference.

29 Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 32; on the history of the *Grabplatte*, which never reached Wittenberg, see Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 306–8.

30 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 161; Anne Marie Neser, "Luthers Geburtshaus in Eisleben—Ursprünge, Wandlungen, Resultate", in *Martin Luther und Eisleben*, (ed.) Knape, 87–120.

Images and Luther

Lutheran relics were not just popular deviations. Lutheranism certainly did not dispense with relics in the broader sense. In this respect, it was decidedly different from Calvinism and Zwinglianism. It was not just that Luther reckoned images to be 'adiaphora', things which were religiously indifferent, whereas Calvin was hostile to any form of image-making. To a quite remarkable degree, Lutheranism from the outset employed pictures and objects as devotional aids, and relics were simply part of this culture. As it did so, it created a visual language which had nothing of the aesthetic of the saints. In Saxony the cleansing of the altars led to a huge programme of investment in art: altar pieces, pulpits, and later, organs—all in line with the new aesthetic, creating a massive marketing opportunity for the workshop of Lucas Cranach, located a stone's throw away from Luther's own house in Wittenberg. Out went the relics collections: in Halle, the fabulous relics collection of Albrecht of Mainz, commemorated in a lavishly illustrated printed book of 1520, disappeared without trace after the Reformation was introduced in Halle in 1541; the main church on the market square was remodelled completely.[31]

The visual was deeply important to Lutheranism. Luther knew all about the importance of brand. Early on, he reinvented his own surname, changing the faintly comic 'Luder' to 'Luther', derived from 'Eleutherius', the freed one;[32] he designed his own emblem, the Luther rose, which was regularly incorporated in images of Luther; and early on, the movement had its own logo, VDMIA (Verbum dei manet in aeternum, or, the word of God remains forever) worn on their sleeves by members of the Reformation party at the Diet of Speyer in 1526.[33] The 'relics' therefore slotted in to a whole cultural repertoire, for Lutherans used a variety of material objects, images, mnemonics and mottos

31 The relic book was illustrated by Wolf Traut of Nuremberg, a Dürer pupil. See the facsimile reprint, Heinrich L. Nickel (ed.), *Das Hallesche Heiltumsbuch von 1520* (Halle: Stekovics, 2001); Sabine Kramer and Karsten Eisenmenger (eds.), *Die Marktkirche unser Lieben Frauen zu Halle* (Halle: Stekovics, 2004); Reinhard Rüger, *Marktkirche U. L. Frauen Halle/Saale*, DKV Kunstführer 414, 5th edition (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2006), 9–10 on the gallery, completed between 1549 and 1554, that is, during Justus Jonas's lifetime: he died in 1555. Jonas is commemorated directly opposite Luther with his sign, the whale.

32 Leppin, *Martin Luther*, 124–5.

33 Or as the Catholic Thomas Murner liked to scoff, "Verbum dei manet im Ærmel" (The word of God remains up their sleeve), Oswald Beyer, "A Public Mystery", *Lutheran Quarterly* XXVI (2012): 125–41, 126.

to proclaim the message. Instantly recognizable because they were standardized, they created a Lutheran visual identity.

One of the techniques they used most was to circulate Luther's image. A sixteenth-century vogue, portraits were in fact closely connected to relics. The new individual portraits of the Renaissance owed a good deal not only to the classical revival but to reliquaries, which frequently took the form of imaginary bust sculptures of the saint whose relics would be placed there in concealed pockets. The early Renaissance representations of individuals followed this format, minus the relic, showing individuals in three-dimensional, life-like sculpture down to the upper shoulders. They retained a religious significance too, for through prayer for the dead ancestor whose memory was kept alive through the image, his or her time in purgatory would be shortened.[34] What was different about Luther images was that they were not commissioned for him and his family, but were mass produced.

The first image we have of Luther comes from the printing flurry around the Leipzig disputation: the crude woodcut that prefaced the publication of his sermon there shows a monk with doctor's cap, and the facial features are indistinct (Fig. 15.1).[35] But it was his appearance at Worms which made him a superstar; and the painter Lucas Cranach, who lived in Wittenberg around the corner, was centrally involved in shaping Luther's image. By 1521 not only were portraits of Luther circulating at the Reichstag, but there were medals for purchase as well, featuring Luther in profile in relief. These were valuable and finely wrought: the owner of one has added a hole so that the medal could be worn around the neck (alternatively it could be affixed to a hat). Medals of Luther continued to be struck throughout his life, and were produced to commemorate his death. They were an obsession of the age: self-consciously classicizing, they harked back to Roman antiquities and coins. Small, precious, and yet not so valuable as to be beyond the pockets of educated burghers, they could fit in the palm of the hand to be touched as well as looked at, passed from hand to hand.[36] Soon bigger broadsheet images of Luther's likeness were

34 Luke Syson, "Witnessing Faces, Remembering Souls", in *Renaissance Faces, Van Eyck to Titian*, (ed.) Lorne Campbell, Miguel Falomir, Jennifer Fletcher and Luke Syson (London: National Gallery / New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

35 Martin Luther, *Ein Sermon geprediget tzu Leipßgk* (Leipzig: Stöckel, 1519).

36 For information on the use of medals I am indebted to Tim Wilson of the Ashmolean Museum; for examples of Luther medals, see Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 326–7 (F 36–9); for a collection of Luther medals, see the Kunstsammlung of the Wartburg; and see *Gottes Wort und Menschenbild—Werke von Cranach und seinen Zeitgenossen* (Gotha: Gotha Schlossmuseum, 1994), parts 1 and 2, part 2, 29–30.

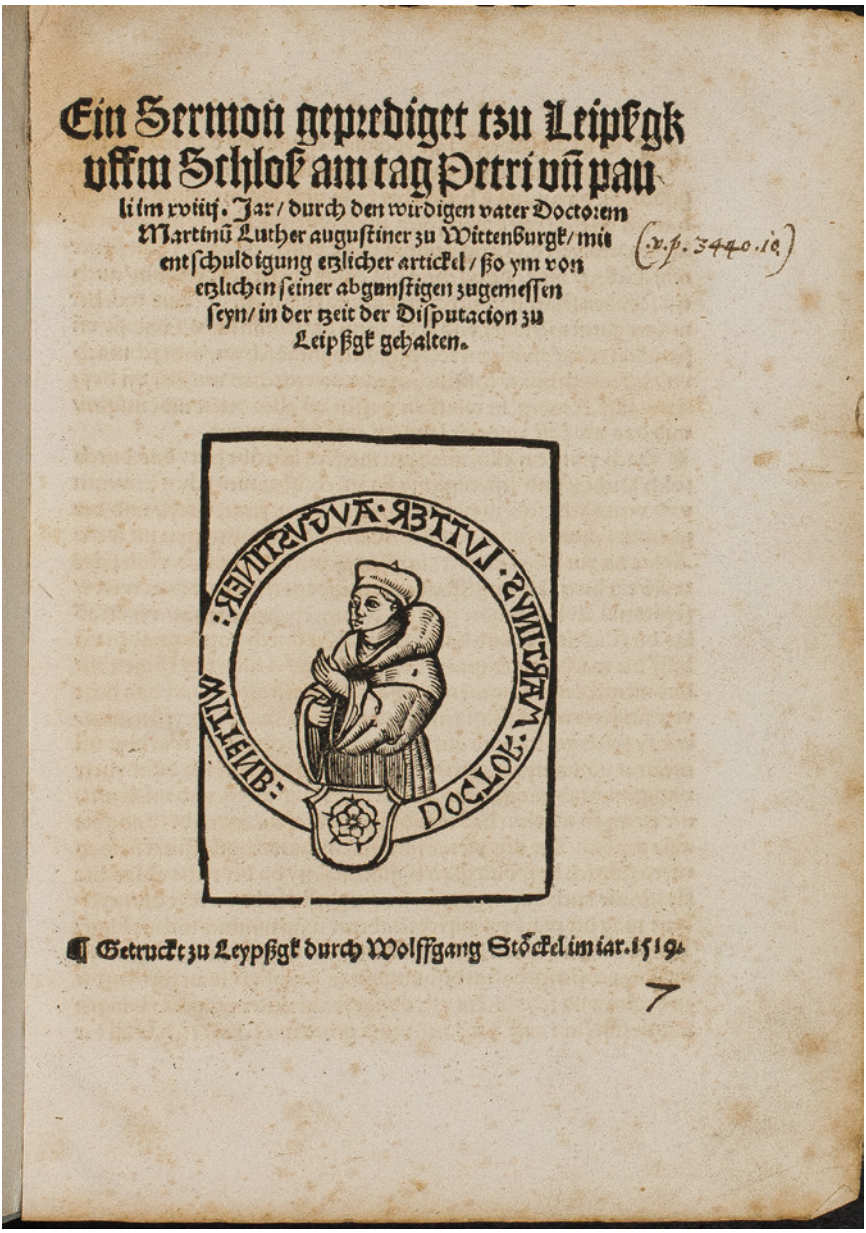
Ein Sermon geprediget tzu Leipßgk
vffm Schloß am tag Petri vñ pau
li im xviij. Jar / durch den wirdigen vater Doctorem
Martinū Luther augustiner zu Wittenburgk / mit
entschuldigung etzlicher artickel / ßo ym von
etzlichen seiner abgunstigen zugemessen
seyn / in der tzeit der Disputacion zu
Leipßgk gehalten.
(v.f. 3440.19)
AVGVSTINER · MARTINVS · LVTHER · AVGVSTINER ·
DOCTOR ·
Getruckt zu Leypßgk durch Wolffgang Stöckel im iar. 1519.
7

FIGURE 15.1 *Anon.*, Martin Luther, *in Martin Luther*, Ein Sermon geprediget tzu Leipßgk (*Leipzig: Stöckel, 1519*), *woodcut.*
PHOTO: HERZOG AUGUST BIBLIOTHEL WOLFENBÜTTEL. H: G 505.4° HELMST. (12).

available, alongside hymns and poems, some showing his whole body, some just his face. Interestingly, some of these were poster-size single sheets that lacked text. Their purpose therefore was solely decorative, to function as likenesses of Luther (Fig. 15.2).[37]

FIGURE 15.2 *Hans Brosamer*, Martin Luther, *1530, woodcut printed by Wolfgang Resch.*
SOURCE: MAX GEISBERG, *THE GERMAN SINGLE-LEAF WOODCUT: 1500–1550*, REV. AND ED. WALTER L. STRAUSS, 4 VOLS (NEW YORK: HACKER ART BOOKS, 1974), VOL. I, 391.

37 There is a matching woodcut of Katharina von Bora. Geisberg and Strauss, *German Single-Leaf Woodcut 1500–1550*, I, 391; see also Hans Brosamer, Martin Luther, c. 1540, Max Geisberg, *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut: 1500–1550*, rev. and (ed.) Walter L. Strauss, 4 vols (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1974), vol. I, 393, printed by Hans Guldenmund, Nuremberg.

All these objects could be multiplied and mass produced; and all were related to print. The medals were based on woodcut designs and the poster woodcuts applied the new technology to make affordable art. It might be argued that their mass production disqualifies them from being relics, since they were by definition not unique. But as fragments derived from a whole, the point of relics is to multiply the loci of the holy. The new technology of printing made this possible on a massive scale—and indeed Counter Reformation saints' cults exploited the same idea. What is particularly striking in the case of Luther is how stylized they were, and how many different media were used. Even when Cranach's workshop produced paintings of Luther, they were replications. Duplication techniques were used so that standardized images could be churned out: one of the workshop's cartoons has survived, complete with the line-cuts for reproduction (Fig. 15.3). It has been estimated that the workshop produced over a thousand images of the reformer.[38] This was factory production, as close to print as painting could get. And you could buy Luther likenesses on a wide range of household objects: there were Luther beer-mugs, Luther jugs, Luther relief portraits in metal. The sixteenth-century mould for a Luther relief portrait of papier-mâché, based on a Cranach woodcut of Luther's head, has also survived, designed for those whose purse would not stretch to the durable metal version.[39]

Perhaps the most remarkable instance of the function of a Luther image is the Wittenberg altarpiece, completed (by the Cranach workshop) the year after Luther died (Fig. 15.4). It shows a series of Wittenberg worthies and on the predella we see Luther preaching while above, Luther, as Junker Jörg, receives the sacrament. This object therefore makes the reformer visually present, preaching as he would have done, in his own church. A Catholic altar includes a relic: the altar is not only the stage for the sacred drama of the mass but is itself a reliquary, and is consecrated. The Wittenberg city altar thus functions as a reformed relic—it invokes the dead reformer, and his image is part of what makes it a devotional object, surrounded by the other Wittenbergers who are also commemorated, like donors, on the altarpiece, and are depicted administering the sacraments or amongst the congregation.[40]

This would have been unthinkable in Calvinism, and the status of the image of the reformer himself became a flashpoint for the differing attitudes

38 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 322–3 (F 31). There is a matching cartoon for Katharina von Bora, and the pinpricks are still evident. Berlin, Kupfertsichkabinett KdZ 4794.

39 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 324–5 (F 32).

40 See Joseph Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (London: Yale University Press, 2004), 69–80.

FIGURE 15.3 *Cranach workshop, cartoon of Martin Luther, Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin. KdZ 4794.*
PHOTO: BPK / KUPFERSTICHKABINETT, STAATLICHE MUSEEN ZU BERLIN / VOLKER-H. SCHNEIDER.

FIGURE 15.4 *Lucas Cranach the Elder*, Wittenberg altarpiece, *1547*.
PHOTO: JÜRGEN M. PIETSCH. COURTESY OF THE STADTKIRCHE WITTENBERG.

of Lutherans and Calvinists to images. One unwise Calvinist student threw dung at a house which bore the legend "Gottes Wort/ Lutheri Lehr/ vergehet nun noch nimmer mehr" ("God's Word and Luther's Teaching will not perish now or ever"): the very next day, he dropped down dead.[41] (And well might the Calvinist student have been outraged: the house bore the inscription because it had been spared from fire, so the 'golden lettering' looked very much as if it had protective magical powers.) Another Calvinist preacher was so infuriated by an image of Luther that he drained a glass of beer, and saying "this one's for you, Luther", threw the glass at the image. The shard, the compiler of the eighteenth-century collector of 'Luther Relics' notes, can still be seen in the eyes.[42] This example is a highly ritualized insult, which owes more than a little to the practice of punishing saints who were felt to have failed. It suggests that images of Luther were indeed thought to have special power.

41 Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 34; Helmar Junghans, *Wittenberg als Lutherstadt*, 2nd edition (Berlin: Union Verlag, 1982), 163. It can also be found on houses elsewhere and on medals.

42 Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 33–4.

Devotion and Aggression

Moreover, Lutheran devotion was far from indifferent to Luther's physical body. What Luther looked like mattered intensely, and objects which replicated his appearance were produced even during Luther's lifetime for the pious Lutheran market. These images became quasi-relics and might even take on a life of their own: for example, a copper etching of a Cranach painting of Luther proclaims that it is a 'true counterfeit' of the original image of the great 'counterfeiter' Cranach, 'which now hangs in the princely library at Gottorff'; while the Pietist August Hermann Francke owned a Cranach workshop portrait of Luther which he kept as one of the most valued items of his art and natural history collection.[43]

The Cranach workshop cartoon shows which features of Luther's physiognomy were regarded as essential for creating a recognizable Luther. The eyes, deep-set, with wrinkles below, are piercing; there are frown lines above the nose, smile lines by the mouth, and a dimple on the chin; and the area from below the nose to the chin juts forward, so that the mouth is prominent. The weight of the face is clear, and there are rolls of fat around the neck. A wayward curl pokes out from under the doctor's cap, its untidiness hinting at vulnerability, as well as reminding the viewer that Luther is not tonsured.[44] Luther's attire is stylized to the point of becoming a uniform: in virtually every image he wears an outer black cloak, often trimmed with fur, a white collar with black ribbon tie, and—most striking of all—a thin line of crimson indicates a scarlet undergarment, hidden by the black cassock (Fig. 15.5). The startling red against the white and black enlivens the picture, hinting that this is not a monastic figure, and yet it is almost hidden by the patrician black.[45] So powerful was this stylized representation that it even shaped how people viewed Luther: Johann Wilhelm Reiffenstein's sketch of the reformer, made while Reiffenstein was a student at Wittenberg, shows a Luther with a giant head atop narrow

43 Irmgard Stahl, *Verzeichnis der Luther-Bildnisse* (*Deutsche Staatsbibliothek. Handschrifteninventare, 5*) (Berlin: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, 1982), 3, no. 21, and Anhang, "Warhafftiges Conterfeit Doct. Martini Lutheri nach dem Original so der fürtreffliche Counterfeiter Cranach mahler Anno 1525 . . . gemahlet vnd itzo in der fürstl. Bibliothec Zu Gottoff befindlich abgebildet" (3). On the meaning of "conterfeit" see Valentin Groebner, "Inside Out: Clothes, Dissimulation, and the Arts of Accounting in the Autobiography of Matthäus Schwartz, 1496–1574", *Representations* 66 (1999): 100–21; and on Francke's Luther portrait, now lost, Nickel, *Luther und Halle*, catalogue nos 41–3.

44 Meller, *Fundsache Luther* 322–4 (F 31).

45 On Luther's clothing, see Ulinka Rublack, "Luther in Red", in Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

FIGURE 15.5 *Workshop of Lucas Cranach the Elder*, Martin Luther, *c. 1540.* PHOTO COURTESY OF THE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DER VESTE COBURG / GERMANY.

shoulders (Fig. 15.6). Reiffenstein was no artist, yet the classic Luther motifs are instantly recognizable, the fur trimming, the attire; the folds of fat on the neck, the eyes with their gaze into the middle distance, the wayward curl, dimple on the chin and the prominent mouth area. Bordered with crosses, Reiffenstein's

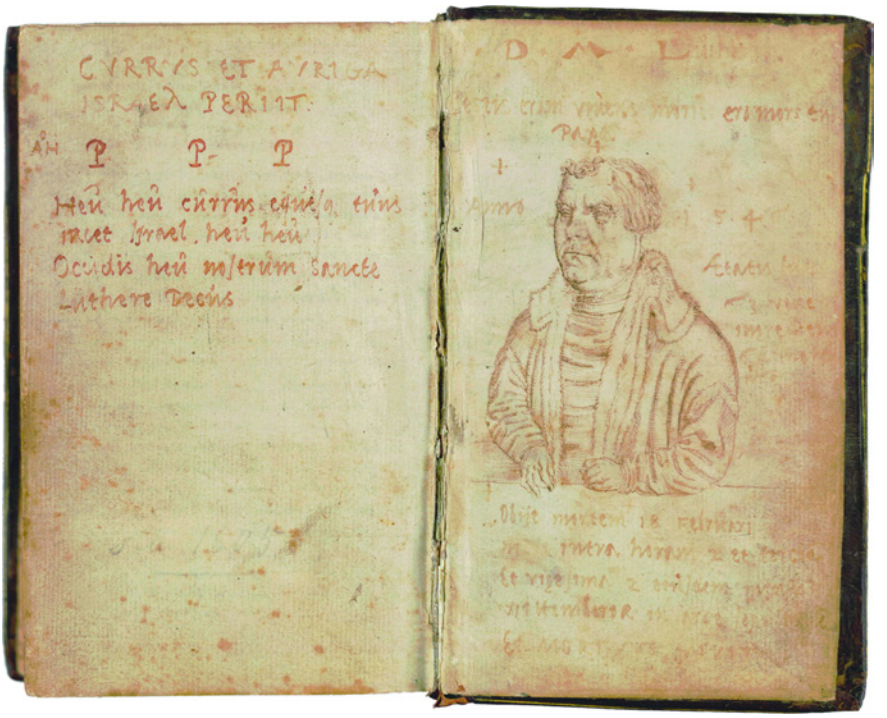

FIGURE 15.6 *Johann Wilhelm Reiffenstein, Sketch of Martin Luther, 1545(?).* PHOTO: LUTHERHAUS, WITTENBERG.

portrait, on the inside cover of a copy of the New Testament, has been turned into a shrine to the reformer by a later hand: it records the time date and place of birth and death, adding "Alas, alas o Israel" and concluding "And though he is dead, he lives!"[46]

The key features of this new kind of relic were that it was reproducible and uniform. It helped create a sense of belonging and of identity. Just as medieval relics had done, it took the religious into the domestic, but it did not sanctify the private—far from it, for these images were too human. Instead, it fostered an ethic of emotional connection with the great man, whose deep-set eyes caught yours—again, a relationship with images which had also been propagated by saints' cults.

But the emotionality which the images elicited was double-edged. One striking feature of many Luther images is that they are often coupled with aggressive mottos. So Reiffenstein's pen sketch bears the legend "I was a plague

46 Meller, *Fundsache Luther*, 99, 302; Joestel, *Luthers Schatzkammer*, 114; the motto was added by a later hand.

to you when I lived, Pope, but dying I will be your death." The saying comes from Luther himself, and was repeated in Bugenhagen's funeral sermon for him;[47] it also stood on the full-length portrait of Luther outside his birth-house in Eisleben. A medal struck in 1533 with a profile portrait of Luther bears a verse from Luke's gospel on the back, reading, in abbreviated form, "For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." (Luke 21:15). In the market church in Halle, where the balcony is adorned with mannerist decorative frieze, the Biblical texts include warnings against false prophets and those who come attired as angels but preach false gospel. In this way, Luther relics became charged with aggressive power, as though Luther's image legitimated the attack on the Roman church.

By the second half of the sixteenth century there was a market for anti-papal household objects too: jugs which portrayed the vile deeds of the monks, vessels for liquid in the shape of an ugly fat monk, and even a mug depicting the Pope as the serpent of the Apocalypse.[48] The technique of combining positive with aggressive images was a propaganda device which Luther and Cranach had exploited early on in such works as the *Passional of Christi and Antichristi* (1521), where a series of paired woodcut images deliberately contrasted the pomp of the Pope with Christ's humility. In the "Effigy of the Papacy", a series of woodcuts produced to accompany one of Luther's last works, *Against the Roman Papacy: An Institution of the Devil* (1545), the anti-papal rhetoric is even more shocking: the pope is shown with excrement, or is suckled by demons, or is depicted as a hermaphrodite.[49] This is a kind of visual iconoclasm, where the

47 Johannes Cochlaeus, "The deeds and writings of Dr Martin Luther . . .", in Elizabeth Vandiver, Ralph Keen and Thomas D. Frazel, trans. and (eds.), *Luther's Lives: Two Contemporary Accounts of Martin Luther* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 53–351, 349: Cochlaeus referred to it as "this filthy prophecy".

48 As Miri Rubin has argued, Marian veneration could also display this double aspect, legitimating attacks on Jewish communities: Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (London: Yale University Press, 2009), 228–55. The mug with the Pope as serpent is to be found in the Kunstgewerbemuseum Berlin. There is also a stone inscription on a Wittenberg house which attacks the papacy and Calvin for good measure: "Gottes Wort vnd Lutheri Schrift ist des Bapst vnd Calvini Gift"—the letters were renewed for the Reformation Jubilee of 1717. Volkmar Jöstel and Jutta Strehle, *Luthers Bild und Lutherbilder. Ein Rundgang durch die Wirkungsgeschichte* (Wittenberg: Stiftung Luthergedenkstätten in Sachsen-Anhalt, 2003), 25.

49 On these images, see Hartmann Grisar S. J. and Franz Heege, S. J., *Luthers Kampfbilder. Vol. 4. Die "Abbildung des Papsttums" und andere Kampfbilder in Flugblättern 1538–45* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder & co, 1923).

pope's image is defaced, and is then put to use as a magical weapon to harm the papacy.

The Cult of Luther

In Catholic Europe, the Counter Reformation brought a renewed trade in relics, as pilgrimages were revived and as the discovery of the Roman catacombs provided a treasure trove of genuine relics to replace older dubious ones. There were new Counter Reformation saints whose cults offered specialist help and healing. New brotherhoods and confraternities were formed, and relics remained central to pious practice; indeed, missionaries in the new world were desperate for relics for their converted flocks, and were entreated, in turn, to send relics of the martyrs of the new world back to the old.[50] Lutheranism, by contrast, had a 'relic culture' of sorts but it deployed these relics as a badge of identity and a vehicle for forging an emotional relationship with the reformer. This relationship was as much about fighting one's enemies as it was about positive identification with Luther's cause; indeed, in Luther's own works, the two are often hard to distinguish.

Luther's image was omnipresent, in churches, in books, in the Bible, but also on domestic walls, on heating ovens and crockery. In the plethora of Luther images, it mattered that Luther's face was 'right'; that the images had the requisite features which made him recognizable. Like relics, these images made Luther portable, and multiplied devotional spaces. To this extent, Luther relics were like saints' relics (and saints, too, featured on Catholic oven tiles). But there were also important differences. For a start, it is telling that his image figured so often on common household objects designed for daily use and so closely connected with drinking and eating. Saints' images were also to be found on domestic furnishings, but in the Lutheran case they fitted seamlessly with an ethos celebrating the patriarchal family, and they presented Luther as an authority figure.

There were deeper differences too. Unlike Counter Reformation saints' relics, Luther images could not heal and could not be prayed to, and this altered the purposes to which they could be put devotionally. (The one exception I know is the Luther splinters, taken from the pillars of the monastery in Wittenberg,

50 Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

and good against toothache.)[51] Moreover, Luther's body and face were corpulent, stressing his pleasure-loving earthiness. They deliberately repudiated an aesthetics of asceticism, and portrayed a real individual, stout, wrinkled and ponderous. Luther's sheer bulk, his lumpy features and his trademark curl celebrated a physicality which was so gutsy that it could only be allied with play and Bakhtinian excess, not with spirituality—to this extent, the nineteenth-century 'flea relic' has an authentic pedigree. What is more, the images had no role in salvation in themselves and did not form part of a religiosity in which the sacred was immanent in specific objects (the Lutheran elements of communion were not relics). They could not be addressed in prayer, and they could not perform miracles.

The sheer physicality of Luther, and the sense of place which went along with Luther relics, were key features of Lutheran devotional style and they supported an ethos of emotional, personal devotion attached to the person of Luther himself. This identification was also about creating a sense of group identity—and it functioned equally powerfully to create enemies. Indeed, given the religious competition of the seventeenth century, and the importance of material objects to Lutheran devotional practices, it is surprising that, for the most part, Lutheran objects did not become magical. On the whole, and despite their own negative assessments of popular superstition, Lutheran pastors managed to hold the line.[52]

Luther was not a saint, and the relics which derived from him did not make saintly claims. Luther relics were secular and devotional objects that were part of the invention of the cult of the great man. He was idealized, but idealized with faults—his temper, his love of beer—just as later German heroes would be presented warts and all (the warts, of course, having been carefully selected). Lutheran use of relics was thus a halfway house between the cult of the saints and the cult of the great man, which was to reach its full flowering in the nineteenth century. The mixture is perfectly exemplified in the castle church at Wittenberg, remodelled in the nineteenth century as a national shrine. From

51 Goetz, *De reliquiis Lutheri*, 32 mentions a variant of this practice in Eisleben, where a journeyman reputedly cut a splinter from the bed in which Luther died: "und damit als mit einem Heiligthum aller Orten geprahlet" (and as though he had a holy relic he boasted about it everywhere).

52 For a different view, see Scribner, "Magic and the Formation of Protestant Popular Culture in Germany" and "The Reformation, Popular Magic, and the 'Disenchantment of the World' ", in R. W. Scribner, *Religion and Culture in Germany* (*1400–1800*), (ed.) Lyndal Roper (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2001).

the beginning, the Luther cult de-sacralised the relic. Pilgrimage became tourism; saint worship, a cult of belonging which could fit seamlessly into political identity. This was why political rulers collected Luther relics so early, and why the Janus-faced emotional dynamic of the objects—attachment to the figure of Luther and hatred of his enemies—could so easily be co-opted by aggressive nationalism.

It is a final irony of the story that Luther tourism is now being invoked by the Lutheran church so as to raise money for the preservation of the fabric of Wittenberg and of all the other Luther-sites in the economically poor states of the former German Democratic Republic, with Luther relics featuring as crowd-pleasers in the recent Luther exhibitions. On the website of the American Old Lutheran church, you can purchase a bobble-head Luther doll, while the Wittenberg branch of one chocolate chain store offers edible Luther medals. Eating a Luther medal is probably as good a way as any of exorcising the power of relics.

References

Archival Sources

Thüringischen Staatsarchiv Gotha (ThStA Gotha). Geheimes Archiv, E XI Nr. 52.

Works Published before 1800

Goetz, Georg Henricus. 1703. *De Reliquiis Lutheri, Diversis in locis asservatis, singularia*. Leipzig: Christian Emmerich.

Luther, Martin. 1519. *Ein Sermon geprediget tzu Leipßgk*. Leipzig: Stöckel.

Works Published after 1800

Behringer, Wolfgang. 1988. *Mit dem Feuer vom Leben zum Tod. Hexengesetzgebung in Bayern*. Munich: Hugendubel.

Beyer, Oswald. 2012. A Public Mystery. *Lutheran Quarterly* XXVI: 125–41.

Cochlaeus, Johannes. 2002. The deeds and writings of Dr Martin Luther. . . . In *Luther's Lives: Two Contemporary Accounts of Martin Luther*, (eds.) and trans. Elizabeth Vandiver, Ralph Keen and Thomas D. Frazel, 53–351. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Clossey, Luke. 2008. *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fischart, Johann. 1967. *Flöh Hatz, Weiber Tratz*. (Ed.) Alois Haas. Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam.

Geisberg, Max. 1974. *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut: 1500–1550*. Rev. and (ed.) Walter L. Strauss. 4 vols. New York: Hacker Art Books.

Gottes Wort und Menschenbild—Werke von Cranach und seinen Zeitgenossen. 1994. Gotha: Gotha Schlossmuseum.

Grisar, Hartmann, S. J., and Franz Heege, S. J. 1923. *Luthers Kampfbilder. Vol. 4. Die "Abbildung des Papsttums" und andere Kampfbilder in Flugblättern 1538–45*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder & co.

Groebner, Valentin. 1999. Inside Out: Clothes, Dissimulation, and the Arts of Accounting in the Autobiography of Matthäus Schwartz, 1496–1574. *Representations* 66: 100–21.

Grossmann, G. Ulrich (ed.). 2004. *Faszination Meisterwerk—Dürer—Rembrandt—Riemenschneider*. Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum Verlag.

Hoffmann, Wolfgang. 1996. *Luther. Ein praktischer Reiseführer zu den bedeutendsten Wirkungsstätten des Reformators in Deutschland*. Wernigerode: Schmidt.

Joestel, Volkmar (ed.). 2008. *Luthers Schatzkammer. Kostbarkeiten im Lutherhaus Wittenberg*. Dössel: Stekovics Verlag.

Jöstel, Volkmar and Jutta Strehle. 2003. *Luthers Bild und Lutherbilder. Ein Rundgang durch die Wirkungsgeschichte*. Wittenberg: Stiftung Luthergedenkstätten in Sachsen-Anhalt.

Junghans, Helmar. 1982. *Wittenberg als Lutherstadt*. Second edition. Berlin: Union Verlag.

Koerner, Joseph. 2004. *The Reformation of the Image*. London: Yale University Press.

Kramer, Sabine and Karsten Eisenmenger (eds.). 2004. *Die Marktkirche unser Lieben Frauen zu Halle*. Halle: Stekovics.

Leppin, Volker. 2006. *Martin Luther*. Darmstadt: Primus Verlag.

Luther, Martin. 1883–. *Luthers Werke*. (Ed.) J. F. K. Knaake et al. Weimar: Böhlau.

———. *Luther's Works*. 1955–. (Eds.) Jaroslav Pelikan, Oswald Hilton et al. 55 vols. St Louis and Philadelphia: Concordia and Fortress.

Martin, Ruth. 1989. *Witchcraft and the Inquisition in Venice, 1550–1650*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Meller, Harald (ed.). 2008. *Fundsache Luther. Archäologen auf den Spuren des Reformators*. Stuttgart: Theiss Verlag.

Neser, Anne Marie. 2007. Luthers Geburtshaus in Eisleben—Ursprünge, Wandlungen, Resultate. In *Martin Luther und Eisleben*, (ed.) Rosemarie Knape, 87–120. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt.

Nickel, Heinrich L. (ed.). 2001. *Das Hallesche Heiltumsbuch von 1520*. Halle: Stekovics.

Nickel, Heinrich, Raphael Pregla, Paul Raabe and Hildegard Seidel (eds.). 1996. *Martin Luther und Halle. Kabinettausstellung der Marienbibliothek und der Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle im Luthergedenkjahr 1996*. Halle: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag.

Ott, Joachim and Martin Treu. 2008. *Luthers Thesenanschlag—Faktum oder Fiktion*. Leipzig: Evangelischer Verlagsanstalt.

Rubin, Miri. 2009. *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary*. London: Yale University Press.

Rublack, Ulinka. 2010. *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rüger, Reinhard. 2006. *Marktkirche U. L. Frauen Halle/Saale.* DKV Kunstführer 414. Fifth edition. Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag.

Ruggiero, Guido. 1993. *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage, and Power at the End of the Renaissance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sames, Arno. 1996. Martin Luther und die Reformation in Halle. In *Martin Luther und Halle. Kabinettausstellung der Marienbibliothek und der Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle im Luthergedenkjahr 1996*, (eds.) Heinrich Nickel, Raphael Pregla, Paul Raabe and Hildegard Seidel, 7–12. Halle: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag.

Scribner, R. W. 1987. Incombustible Luther: The Image of the Reformer in Early Modern Germany. In R. W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*, 323–53. London: Hambledon.

———. 2001. *Religion and Culture in Germany* (*1400–1800*). (Ed.) Lyndal Roper. Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill.

Stahl, Andreas. 2007. Baugeschichtliche Erkenntnisse zu Luthers Elternhaus in Mansfeld und seiner Bewohner. In *Martin Luther und Eisleben*, (ed.) Rosemarie Knape, 353–90. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlangsanstalt.

Stahl, Irmgard. 1982. *Verzeichnis der Luther-Bildnisse* (*Deutsche Staatsbibliothek. Handschrifteninventare, 5*). Berlin: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek.

Syson, Luke. 2008. Witnessing Faces, Remembering Souls. In *Renaissance Faces, Van Eyck to Titian*, (eds.) Lorne Campbell, Miguel Falomir, Jennifer Fletcher and Luke Syson, 14–31. London: National Gallery / New Haven: Yale University Press.

CHAPTER 16

The Art of Making Memory: Epitaphs, Tables and Adages at Westminster Abbey

Peter Sherlock

In 1598 Paul Hentzner, a forty-year old Silesian lawyer, visited the sights of London.[1] Like many contemporaries and countless millions since, he visited the key attractions of the Tower of London, the royal palaces at Whitehall, Hampton Court, and Windsor, and St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.[2] Famously, he saw Queen Elizabeth herself, then in the fortieth year of her reign. Many years later in Nuremberg in 1612, Hentzner published a Latin account of his travels. It devotes considerable attention to monuments in the churches as well as observations on the people, customs, and landscapes he encountered.

Why did Hentzner visit these sites? Protestantism was well-established in the realm, and, while some saints' relics remained in their shrines, pilgrimage in its traditional sense was no longer possible. Hentzner did not seem to share the passion for itinerant collecting of England's antiquaries. His interests were at the same time both broader and less systematic than theirs. He was not particularly interested in scholarship in the sense of the creation, recovery or preservation of knowledge in its literary and material forms. Instead, his aims appear to have been self-improvement, the expansion of horizons, and simple curiosity, aims he had sufficient means to fulfil. All this is remarkably close to what later generations would call tourism, a phenomenon that has received very little attention in early modern England prior to the vogue for the continental 'Grand Tour'. Indeed, one of the great untold stories of Westminster

1 Paul Hentzner, *Itinerarium Germaniae, Galliae, Angliae, Italiae*, (Nuremberg: Wagenmann, 1612); L. L. Ford, "Hentzner, Paul (1558–1623)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, May 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/92460, accessed 4 July 2013].

2 Hentzner's itinerary in London was paralleled by Zdenkonius Brtnicensis, or "Baron Waldstein", who recounted at length his visit in 1600 to Westminster Abbey, St Paul's, the Tower, and the palace at Whitehall. See G. W. Groos, trans., *The Diary of Baron Waldstein: A Traveller in Elizabethan England*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981).

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_018

Abbey and other major London sites is how and when they became tourist attractions over a period of several hundred years.[3]

Although Hentzner may have been one of the first to publish something equivalent to modern travel-writing, his record demonstrates that his visits were facilitated by guides in ways not unfamiliar to the twenty-first century. Tourism was not a one-way phenomenon, but a practice in which Hentzner's hosts were already well-versed. At the Tower of London, for example, his party was met by a guide who confiscated their weapons, then showed them rich fabrics, costumes, and armour from the royal collection housed therein. He was probably shown the tombs at Westminster Abbey by the 'keeper of the monuments', a small but significant role existing at least as early as 1561 when William Jenkinson was appointed chief verger by the Dean and Chapter and given the "custodie and oversight of the Tombes and monuments and of ye pictures of kings and quenes w[ith]in all ye saide church remaynyng".[4] The keeper of the monuments, who charged a fee, was frequently lampooned in verse, as in John Donne's satire:

> . . . Tis sweet to talke of Kings. At Westminster,
> Said I, The man that keepes the Abbey tombes,
> And for his price doth with who ever comes,
> Of all our Harries, and our Edwards talke,
> From King to King and all their kin can walke . . .[5]

Hentzner was precisely the sort of tourist for whom William Camden would shortly publish a pamphlet in Latin documenting the Abbey's monuments, allowing perusal of the epitaphs at leisure, either before or after an actual visit, or instead of one.[6]

---

3 On early modern English tourism, see Andrew McRae, *Literature and Domestic Travel in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 177; Helga Quadflieg, "Approved Civilities and the Fruits of Peregrination—Elizabethan and Jacobean Travelers and the Making of Englishness," in *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600–2000*, (eds.) Hartmut Berghoff, Barbara Korte, Ralf Schneider and Christopher Harvie (Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 21–45; Daniel Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500–1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 150–53.

4 Patent dated 28 February 1560 (1561), Westminster Abbey, Register v, fol. 33. It is possible that this appointment was related to Elizabeth's Proclamation of 1560 against the defacement of funeral monuments.

5 "Satyre IIII," from John Donne, *Poems* (London: John Marriot, 1633), 339 (lines 74–78).

6 William Camden, *Reges, reginae, nobiles et alii sepulti . . .* (London: excudebat J. G. Bollifantus, 1600). Camden's guide was specifically mentioned by Waldstein in relation to the Abbey

Throughout his published account, Hentzner reproduced several epitaphs, indicative of the way in which texts could be more readily captured in manuscript and shared in print than other elements of material culture. Hentzner's transcriptions contain many errors, nonetheless they allow the monuments of Westminster Abbey to be glimpsed through the eyes of a late sixteenth-century visitor.

What did Hentzner actually see? His visit to the Abbey began on the south side of the high altar, with Anne of Cleves' monument, then moved to perusal of inscriptions purporting to explain the origins of the Stone of Scone, before taking the royal and noble monuments in turn. These ranged from the thirteenth-century shrine of Edward the Confessor through to recently erected tombs for Elizabethan nobles such as Lord Russell and the Countess of Sussex.[7] In 1598, the eastern half of the Abbey would have appeared much as it does today, although the radiating chapels cleared first of their priests and then of their altars were not yet filled to overflowing with the memorials of Elizabethan and Stuart nobles.

Today, as then, the triumph of one generation is materially exceeded by the next. At the centre on an elevated platform is the Confessor's shrine built by Henry III, to which the saint's remains were translated in 1269. Surrounding the shrine is the series of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century tombs for kings and their consorts, beginning with Henry III himself. The fifteenth-century chantry chapel for Henry V floats behind and above the shrine. Finally, further to the east is the unsurpassed magnificence of Henry VII's early sixteenth-century chapel.

Hentzner saw each of these objects and spaces. While he gives little detail about the appearance of individual tombs, he does record inscriptions. Intriguingly, most of those he mentioned are texts added by later generations, and not the original epitaphs that were part of the fabric of the tombs.

Thus, at Henry III's monument, he did not mention the original French epitaph engraved on the uppermost slab, but instead recorded this text:

> Henrici III. Epitaphium ex aere deaurato cum hac inscriptione. Tertius Henricus est Templi conditor huius. Anno 1273. Dulce bellum inexpertis.

---

monuments: "with reference to these, consult a special book, which is printed in London"; Groos, *Diary*, 37. Unless otherwise stated all quotations from the Abbey texts in this essay are taken from Camden (1600), which is unpaginated.

7 Hentzner, *Itinerarium*, 120–26.

> (The epitaph of Henry III of gilded bronze with this inscription. The third Henry founder of this church. Year 1273. War is sweet to those who have not experienced it.)[8]

This inscription was painted in large, gilded capitals on the base of the tomb, facing the passageway or ambulatory encircling the east side of the central chapel of the Abbey. Only the final letters "... pertis" remain visible today.

This text provided everything he needed to know. Unlike the hard-to-reach French epitaph circulated in manuscript and print by antiquaries, the Latin inscription had the advantage of being accessible, placed in large letters where a literate visitor could easily read it. What Hentzner saw and reproduced, then, was the sixteenth-century equivalent of a sign or marker for tourists. It told him and his readers how to interpret the monument: who it represented, that person's achievements, and, for good measure, a short moral lesson.

Hentzner's record demonstrates the role played by these unnoticed and unacknowledged texts in the early modern experience of inspecting tombs and churches. At Westminster, they were painted on the tombs, or hung on tablets nearby. These inscriptions, and many more besides, were recorded repeatedly during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by English chroniclers, antiquaries and heralds. Next to nothing is known about the origin, purpose, content, form or fate of these texts, for very little has survived to the present day apart from the details reproduced in print. Yet, as Hentzner's account illustrates, they were a key part of the commemorative fabric of the Abbey, in most cases providing signs that were more accessible and more detailed than the epitaphs originally engraved on the monuments themselves.

This essay presents the first scholarly analysis of these texts. It focusses on those commemorating the kings and queens between Henry III (d. 1272) and Henry V (d. 1422). While later examples exist (such as the set of texts erected by John Skelton for Henry VIII to commemorate his parents), these earlier texts were the most prominent in the Abbey owing to their central location. The essay attempts to reconstruct the texts using antiquarian evidence, identifying at least two diverse forms (tables, and adages), and indicating the dates at which they were erected. It argues that the texts functioned as early modern tour guides. As such they provide evidence of an early tourist industry at Westminster, prior to the Reformation and the cessation of pilgrimage. Furthermore the essay suggests that the collective memory of English monarchy was fluid and under constant negotiation in the sixteenth and seventeenth

8 Hentzner, *Itinerarium*, 122.

centuries as the epitaphs and verses around the royal tombs at Westminster were written, rewritten, removed, or edited.

The surviving antiquarian evidence suggests there were three types of inscriptions at the Westminster tombs, classed in this essay as epitaphs, tables, and adages. The epitaphs date from the erection of the monuments themselves. They were engraved on the tombs at the time of their construction, either around the ledge of the top slab on which an effigy lay, or on a dedicated plaque. They were difficult to read or digest without peering closely at the monuments from within the Confessor's chapel or through a metal grate. Some, like the epitaphs for Henry III and Eleanor, were little more than identificatory statements, while others took the form of rhyming Latin verse, as at the monument of Richard II.

In the second category were verses written on tables (*tabulae* in Latin), probably of wood, that were hung on the pillars near the tombs, probably in the late fifteenth century. Some at least were attached to the tombs or pillars by an iron chain, secured almost like books in a contemporary library. This medium allowed for the reproduction of lengthy poetry in both Latin and English, that added further detail of lives and characters and gave moral instruction to the reader about virtue and death.

Third were adages, sometimes accompanied by a name, date, and key attribute, painted in large letters on the base of each monument, probably in 1557. These faced the ambulatory around the rear of the Confessor's chapel and were by far the part of the royal monuments most easily seen by visitors. As noted above, they appear to have functioned as signposts or captions.

The form and relationship between the three commemorative elements is set out in the herald Francis Sandford's account of the English royal family published in 1677. Sandford set out to record as much genealogical and heraldic detail about his subjects as possible, including coins, medals, monuments, and even coffin plates, drawing on his first-hand observations as well as the records of earlier antiquaries. Writing on Queen Eleanor's tomb, he described how "on a Tablet of Wood hanging in an Iron Chain near to her Tombe, these old Verses are written in Latin and English". The accompanying plate of the tomb shows the original epitaph running around the upper verge "in Saxon Capitals", as well as the shorter text inscribed on the base of the monument facing the ambulatory: "Regina Aleonora Consors Edwardi Primi Fuit Alenora 1298 Disce Mori".[9]

9 Francis Sandford, *A Genealogical History of the Kings and Queens of England and Monarchs of Great Britain* (London: Thomas Newcomb, 1677), 130–31.

The epitaphs are the most conventional and durable set of texts. They remain *in situ* but are as inaccessible as ever given the need to access the central shrine area with a ladder and a torch to view them properly. Small remnants of the adages remain visible, notably at the monuments for Henry III, Edward I and Henry V.[10] Of the tables, the longest set of texts, no material trace remains. The use of hanging tables for the display of memorial verses is not well studied, partly because very few examples have survived beyond the eighteenth century, though it is clear they were not uncommon in fifteenth-century churches.[11]

The epitaphs and tables—but not the adages—were first recorded in print in the chronicle compiled in manuscript by Robert Fabyan in 1504 and printed posthumously by Richard Pynson in London in 1516.[12] The chronicle, which went through several editions in the sixteenth century, was not particularly interested in monuments or epitaphs, but used them on occasion to sum up the life of a monarch. Fabyan included Latin texts for Henry III, Edward I, and Edward III, and provided English translations into verse in each case.

Most of the tables and adages seem still to have been visible in the late seventeenth century, but by the early eighteenth century they were disappearing. In 1711, describing Henry VII's tomb, Jodocus Crull remarked that,

> On the outside of the brazen Monument were, not many Years ago, remaining two antient Tables in Writing; with many Verses made by Mr. Skelton, Orator and Poet-Laureat to King Henry VII. all written, as well as the last mentioned, in the Praise of the said most Excellent King and Queen; but these have been taken away of late Years; notwithstanding

10 These fragmentary texts are recorded in Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London*, vol. 1., *Westminster Abbey* (London: HMSO, 1924), 29, 31 and 71, which described them as "sixteenth-century" inscriptions, and also recorded the remains of an inscription on Richard II's tomb.

11 On tables, see J. Krochalis, "*Magna Tabula*: The Glastonbury Tablets," *Arthurian Literature*, (eds.) J. P. Carley and F. Riddy, 15 (1997): 93–183; 16 (1998): 41–82; Richard Marks, "Picturing Word and Text in the Late Medieval Parish Church," in *Image, Text and Church, 1380–1600: Essays for Margaret Aston*, (eds.) Linda Clark, Maureen Jurkowski and Colin Richmond (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2009), 162–188; Peter Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 209–11. For a non-royal example at Westminster Abbey dating from 1553, see Ashley Null, "John Redman, the Gentle Ambler," in *Westminster Abbey Reformed 1540–1640*, (eds.) C. S. Knighton and Richard Mortimer (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 38.

12 Robert Fabyan, *Newe cronycles* . . . (London, n.p., 1516). The 1533 edition records the completion of the seventh part of the chronicle on 7 November 1504 at page ccxxix.

> which, we though fit to insert their Inscriptions, among the rest, inscrib'd on this most incomparable Monument.[13]

Similarly, John Dart recorded of Edward I's monument that

> On the North-side of his Tomb, are these Words painted in black, as I suppose, not long since, and under them the Stone rub'd, where, 'tis probably, was the original Inscription, of which this is a Copy . . .[14]

The most comprehensive account of these texts is found in William Camden's guide to the Abbey monuments, first issued in print in 1600, and reissued in 1603 (following the death of queen Elizabeth) and in 1606 (following the erection of her monument).[15] His work was frequently copied by later generations of antiquaries, either to save them the work of fresh transcription, or to compensate for texts that had been removed or had become illegible. Camden was intimately familiar with the Abbey, through long association with its School, and from 1587 to 1597 as its Librarian. His printed guide included a multiplicity of texts for some tombs, and gives a sense of the diversity of memorial artefacts on display in 1600. Yet even Camden's record is incomplete: like Hentzner, for example, he did not print the French epitaphs engraved or embossed on the slabs supporting the effigies of Henry III or Queen Eleanor.

By combining these and the other antiquarian accounts, it is possible to reconstruct the epitaphs, tables and adages associated with the key royal monuments of the late medieval period: those of the Abbey's rebuilder, Henry III, his son Edward I and his queen Eleanor, and their descendants Edward III and Philippa, Richard II and Anne, and Henry V and Katharine.

A further set of similar commemorative objects also existed in the early sixteenth-century chapel that housed the tombs of Henry VII and Elizabeth, and Henry's mother Margaret Beaufort. In this case, epitaphs on the verge of the tombs were augmented by poetry engraved around the metal enclosures and tables hung alongside.[16] The tables contained lengthy Latin elegies, written

13 Jodocus Crull, *The antiquities of St. Peters, or the abbey church of Westminster* (London: J.N., 1711), 80–81.

14 John Dart, *Monumenta Westmonasteriensis*, 2nd edition (London: J. Cole, 1742), vol. 2, 31.

15 Camden, *Reges*.

16 For these monuments, see Peter Sherlock, "Henry VII's 'orbis miraculum': Royal Commemoration at Westminster Abbey 1500–1700," in *Rituals, Images and Words: Varieties of Cultural Expression in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Late Medieval and Early Modern Studies 3, (ed.) F. W. Kent and Charles Zika (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 177–99.

on parchment, not wood, and giving the author's name as John Skelton and the dates of creation as 1512 (Henry) and 1516 (Margaret).[17] Space does not permit a detailed analysis of these here. They merit their own treatment for two reasons. First, the chapel, monuments, epitaphs and tables were all erected within a period of less than twenty years under the patronage of Henry VII or Henry VIII. Second, their complex use of language (Latin, and some Greek) reflects the full impact of humanist approaches to Latin poetry and Renaissance commemorative ideals.

Attempting to date the earlier tables and adages is difficult, as evidence varies from monument to monument. It is clear from the evidence of Fabyan (1516) and Camden (1600), that the tables and adages were erected at different times. This is readily seen in their accounts of the plain stone monument for Edward I. The monument had no epitaph, but Fabyan recorded a pair of Latin verses, and that a second "vercifyer"

> made these verses folowynge and caused them to be hanged ouer the place of hys sepulture . . . The whych verses, to the entent yt they shuld be had in mynde, & also yt the reder myght haue ye more desyre to ouer rede the' I haue therfore set them out in baladde royall, after my rude makynge as foloweth.[18]

In 1598, Hentzner ignored the table and only mentioned the adage painted on the tomb, "Eduvardus [*sic*] primus Scottorum malleus hic est. 1308. *Pactum serva*."[19] Two years later, Camden printed the Latin adage, both the twenty-four lines of Latin verse and the single pair mentioned by Fabyan, and an equally long, new English translation, suggesting that all of these constituted Edward's 'epitaph'.

This evidence suggests that by 1504 there was a table of Latin verses for Edward I, by 1598 a painted adage on the side of his tomb, and by 1600, a table of both Latin verses and English translation, which was still visible in 1677.[20] A similar chronology of events can be observed for the monuments of Henry III and Edward III as recorded in Fabyan and Camden.

A further piece of evidence relating to the textual commemoration of the monarchs in these diverse media is found the Westminster Abbey accounts, dated December 1568. This document includes payment of sixteen shillings

17 See Camden, *Reges* (1600).

18 Fabyan, *Cronycle* (1533), fol. lxviii.

19 Hentzner, *Itinerarium*, 121.

20 Sandford, *Genealogical history*, 137.

and eight pence to "Wyll[ia]m Jeffryes Joyner for the making of v tables for the Epytaphes of the kings".[21] The number of tables, five, would fit if it included Henry III, Edward I, Edward III, Richard II, and Henry V, although it does not account for the tables mentioned in relation to the monuments of queens Eleanor, Philippa, Anne, and Katharine. The account may represent the replacement (or repair) of existing tables, or the creation of entirely new ones, or a mixture of both. The renewed tables may have been redesigned so that Latin texts were now accompanied by English translation, which would explain why Camden and later antiquaries reported tables with texts in both Latin and English. If this is the case, it would be a fascinating example where Fabyan's printed chronicle might have inspired the makers of the tables to alter the texts to include English translation, such that the medium of print prompted a change in the material culture of commemoration.

The tables accompanying the complex monument for Henry V and his wife Katherine are particularly difficult to date. For Henry V, Fabyan gives two sets of verses. The first of these is in Latin and not recorded by later, Protestant antiquaries, perhaps because it was entirely concerned with how the king's desires for masses for his departed soul were to be fulfilled on each day of the week. If it did in fact appear at the tomb in material form, this text was likely removed in 1548 when the chantries were dissolved, or in 1561 when the Abbey's altars were taken down. The second text, entitled "Lenvoy", is a formal English poem of four verses of eight lines each. This was reproduced by Camden and his successors, though again it is not clear if it was actually hung at the tomb by Camden's time or simply copied from Fabyan. Queen Katherine, whose corpse lay on semi-public view in the lower part of Henry V's chantry from the early sixteenth century after its removal during the building works for Henry VII's chapel, had a long table of verses by Camden's time. Writing in the eighteenth century, John Dart speculated that these verses written by Skelton at the same time as he completed those for Henry VII and Margaret Beaufort.[22]

A table of verses with close parallels to the table prepared for Queen Katherine was hung at the monument of John of Gaunt near the high altar of St Paul's Cathedral, London.[23] John of Gaunt was a direct ancestor of Henry VII through his mother, Margaret Beaufort, and like Katherine a significant

21 Westminster Abbey, Muniments 38850 "Chardges done uppon the Churche and Colledge of Westm[inste]r for the space of vij weekes endinge the xviij daye of December . . . 1568".

22 Dart, *Monumenta westmonasterienses* (1742), vol. 2, 39.

23 Oliver Harris, "'Une tres riche sepulture': The tomb and chantry of John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster in Old St Paul's Cathedral, London," *Church Monuments* XXV (2010): 7–35. The Latin text of this table is preserved in Dugdale's history of St Paul's, published

figure for Tudor dynastic claims. Both tables were composed after 1485, as each referred to Henry VII as King of England and explained his line of descent, in John of Gaunt's case through his descendant Margaret Beaufort, and in Queen Katherine's case through her marriage to "Owen Tiddorr" (Owen Tudor). Both draw in wider European dynastic connections: John of Gaunt's title as King of Castile and Leon is emphasised, as is the English claim to the French throne through Katherine's genealogy. It is likely that these tables were erected at the same time, and it is tempting to speculate that they were erected in 1501 for the wedding of Prince Arthur and Katherine of Aragon, to instruct visiting foreign dignitaries and the English populace alike in the legitimacy of Henry VII's rule and his success in procuring further dynastic links.

The verses on all of the tables were predictable in content. For queens, this meant piety, lineage, and childbearing (or lack thereof), while for kings, martial deeds and the preservation of the law were central. Thus Edward I's victories over the Welsh and the Scots were mentioned, but also his rule in time of peace:

> He was in Iustice and in peace,
> Excelling: Lawes tooke place,
> Desire to chase all wicked workes
> Did hold this King's good grace.

Physical form was commonly mentioned. Edward III was "In armes a Giant fierce and fell", while Queen Philippa was "of roseat hue and beautie bright". Learning was significant for both sexes. The "lenvoy" for Henry V mentioned Tully, Seneca, Solomon and "Dame Calliope", while Richard II's epitaph compared him to Homer. Queen Philippa was specifically praised for the foundation of Queens' College Oxford:

> A carefull nurse to Students all,
> At Oxford she did found
> Queenes Colledge she, dame Pallas schoole,
> That did her fame resound.[24]

---

prior to its destruction in the great fire of London in 1666. William Dugdale, *The History of St Paul's Cathedral in London* (London, 1658), 91.

24 On Philippa's epitaphs, see Christopher Collard, "An Epitaph Attributable to John Skelton?," *Notes and Queries* 59.1 (2012): 30–32.

Similar sentiments would be exhaustively recounted in Skelton's elegies for Henry VII and Margaret Beaufort.

Most of the tables, nonetheless, reflected on the futility of worldly achievement and magnificence. The table for Queen Anne, wife of Richard II, had little material to work with, given the brevity of her life and the absence of children. It dwelt on the power of her father Wenceslaus, and the preparations for her arrival, before turning to theme of mortality:

> Against whose comming plaies were made,
> And sights and shewes were seene,
> With Princely pompe to gratifie
> This noble virgin Queene.
> But all mens treasures last not long,
> They hang but on a twine,
> Or slender thread: death Kings and Queenes
> Doth all catch up in fine.

With the exception of the table for Queen Katherine, these texts are not easily construed as dynastic self-promotion. For a start, they are mostly too long to be read with sustained interest, while the physical and visual impact of the magnificent monuments with their many effigies, jewels, and carvings already spoke to the sacred dimensions of monarchy. By 1600, however, the common format of the tables did represent an attempt to impose an interpretative unity on the Abbey tombs through their appearance at each of the major royal monuments.

On account of their brevity and accessibility the adages were arguably more successful than the tables both in communicating to the viewer and in providing a narrative that could encompass all the royal monuments. The adages were almost certainly erected as a set owing to their common form, with the possible exceptions of Queen Anne whose adage seems to have appeared only on a table, not the tomb itself.

Writing in the mid-nineteenth century, A. P. Stanley, the famous Dean of Westminster, proposed that all were the work of Abbot Feckenham, as he had been responsible for the reconstruction of the Confessor's shrine on which one of these texts appeared, and as the texts bore a similarity one to another in both their painted form and their content.[25] Stanley's argument is supported by

25 A. P. Stanley, *Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, 5th edition (London: John Murray 1882), 119, note 4.

material evidence, for the architrave of the shrine bears remnants of two Latin inscriptions, one dating from its erection in Henry III's reign and the other from the sixteenth century, the latter, according to several observers, concluding with the letters "I F A" —presumably, "Ioannes Feckenham Abbatus".[26] The form of this more recent inscription paralleled those of the adages discussed in this paper, positioning the Confessor at the beginning of the line of kings. It is likely this text was painted in 1557, when Feckenham restored the Confessor's shrine, suggesting a date for the whole set of adages:

Edward	Sanctus Edwardus Confessor Rex venerandus (Saint Edward Confessor venerable king)
Henry III	Tertius Henricus est Templi conditor huius. 1273. Dulce bellum inexpertis (Henry the third the founder of this church. 1273. War is sweet to those who have not experienced it)
Edward I	Edwardus primus Scotorum malleus hic est. 1308. Pactum serva (Here is Edward the first the hammer of the Scots. 1308. Keep the faith)
Eleanor	Regina Alionora, Consors Edvardi primi fuit Alionora. 1298. Disce mori (Queen Eleanor, wife of Edward the first was Eleanor. 1298. Learn to die)
Edward III	Tertius Edwardus fama super aethera notus. Pugna pro patria (Edward the third whose fame is known to the heavens above. Fight for your country)
Philippa	Coniux Edwardi iacet hic Regina Philippa. Disce vivere (Here lies Queen Philippa wife of Edward. Learn to live)
Richard II	Hic iacet immiti consumptus morte Richardus. Fuisse faelicem miserrimum (Here lies Richard consumed by pitiless death. To have been happy is the most miserable state)
Anne	Forma fragilis (Beauty is fragile; translated by Camden as Favour fadeth)
Henry V	Gallorum mastix iacet hic Henricus in urna. Domat omnia virtus (Here lies in an urn Henry, the lash of the French. Virtue overcomes all)
Katherine	Pulchra virumque suum sociat tandem Katherina. Otium fuge. (Beautiful Katherine united at last with her husband. Flee idleness)

26 E. W. Brayley and J. P. Neale, *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster* (London: J. P. Neale, 1818), vol. 2, 170; RCHME, *Westminster Abbey*, 28.

Many of these texts were quotes from ancient authors. The first line of Richard II's text was adapted from Tibullus, who reported it as his own desired epitaph in one of his elegies. Edward III's "fama super aethera notus" was from Virgil's *Aeneid*, while "pugna pro patria" was found in the collection of sayings attributed to Cato. Both texts were repeated under the king's statue at King's Hall, Cambridge.

This collective presentation of English royal memory leads the viewer towards a contrary mixture of values and behaviours. The visitor is exhorted to "learn to live" or "learn to die", to take up arms for king and country while acknowledging the bitterness of war, to seek virtue but recall the misery that can follow happiness. There is a strongly gendered distinction, nonetheless, with females described by their bodies, relationships, and characters, and males—with the important exception of the murdered Richard II—by their actions in building and fighting. There is also the beginnings of a kind of national identity, for while 'England' or 'Britain' are not named in the adages, the realm is opposed to its neighbours France and Scotland and celebrates victories over them.

The practice of erecting epitaphs, tables, and adages continued beyond Hentzner's time. Elizabeth I was commemorated after her death not only with a tomb at Westminster, but also through printed images of that tomb, containing various funerary verses that were widely distributed and hung in parish churches in London and beyond. No memorial was erected in the Abbey for Anne of Denmark, James VI and I's queen, after her death in 1618, but a table did appear near her grave for some years. Print was a powerful medium for sharing and shaping memory, both at the graveside and well beyond the tomb. In time a book could replace the need for a monument altogether, as was the case with Charles I whose grave at Windsor had far less significance for his memory than the volume *Eikon basilike*.[27]

Did the tables, lost to time, and the adages, remaining only in part, and ignored by most visitors, make any difference to historical understandings of the monarchs they commemorated? There is little evidence to suggest that antiquaries and tourists found anything other than the pleasure of curiosity stoked and satisfied in these signposts and guides. Yet, like the signposts we still write, place, and read in the Abbey, these early tourist guides surely played some small part in making memory at Westminster, memory that stressed the

27 *Eikon Basilike: The Pourtraicture of His Sacred Majestie in His Solitudes and Sufferings* ([London]: [Henry Hills], 1649).

durability and longevity of the monarchy, the power of mighty acts of conquest, and the virtuous piety of learning to live and living to die.

Paul Binski has argued persuasively that Westminster Abbey "acts as an amalgam of signs, a bricolage to ideological ends".[28] Generations of royal and aristocratic patrons appropriated the Abbey, its spaces, and its furnishings to their own ends, reflecting and reproducing their diverse political interests. Such an approach is convincing for it does much to explain the apparent contradiction between the Abbey's power as a globally recognised site of memory, and the almost impenetrable jumble of monuments, altars, banners, spaces, and pavements. Indeed, the Abbey produces an excess of memory that both excludes the possibility of a definitive interpretation and denies a place to purity, unity and consistency in its aesthetic.

This essay has traced some of the little-known threads that criss-cross the royal tombs around the Confessor's shrine. Epitaphs, tables, adages: these ephemeral texts point to the interpretative challenge that has existed at the Abbey since before the Reformation, for tomb-makers, tour-guides and tourists alike. Contrary to appearance, monuments are unstable bearers of meaning, as their fabric is altered, relocated, damaged, reinterpreted, appended, contextualised. Medieval, modern, or otherwise, judicious visitors to the tombs must wrestle with endless yet fragmentary filaments of memory.

References

Archival Sources

Westminster Abbey, Register V, fol. 33 (Patent dated 28 February 1560 [1561].

Westminster Abbey, Muniments 38850.

Works Published before 1800

Camden, William. 1600. *Reges, reginae, nobiles et alii in ecclesia collegiata B. Westmonasterii sepulti.* London, excudebat J. G. Bollifantus.

Crull, Jodocus. 1711. *The antiquities of St. Peters, or, the abbey church of Westminster: containing all the inscriptions, epitaphs, &c*. London: J.N.

Dart, John. 1742. *Westmonasterium, or the History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St Peter's, Westminster*. 2nd edition. London: J. Cole.

Donne, John. 1633. *Poems, by J.D. with Elegies on the Authors Death*. London: John Marriot.

28 Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power 1200–1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 7.

Dugdale, William. 1658. *The History of St Paul's Cathedral in London, from its Foundation untill these times*. London: Warren.

Eikon Basilike the Pourtraicture of His Sacred Maiestie in His Solitudes and Sufferings. 1649. [London]: [Henry Hills].

Hentzner, Paul. 1612. *Itinerarium Germaniae, Galliae, Angliae, Italiae, Cum Indice Locorum, Rerum atq*[*ue*] *Verborum memorabilium*. Nuremberg: Wagenmann.

Robert Fabyan. 1516. *Newe cronycles of Englande and Fraunce.* London, n.p.

———. 1533. *Fabyans cronycle newly prynted.* London: William Rastell.

Sandford, Francis. 1677. A *genealogical history* of the *kings* of *England*, and *monarchs* of *Great Britain*, &c. *from . . . and issues, times of birth, death, places of burial, and monumental inscriptions. London:* Thomas Newcomb.

Works Published after 1800

An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in London. 1924. vol.1. *Westminster Abbey*. London: HMSO.

Binski, Paul. 1995. *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power 1200–1400*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Brayley, Edward Wedlake and John Preston Neale. 1818–23. *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster*, 2 vols. London: J. P. Neale.

Collard, Christopher. 2012. An Epitaph Attributable to John Skelton? *Notes and Queries* 59.1: 30–32.

Ford, L. L. 2006. Hentzner, Paul (1558–1623). In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: University Press.

Groos, G. W. trans. 1981. *The Diary of Baron Waldstein: A Traveller in Elizabethan England*. London: Thames and Hudson.

Harris, Oliver. 2010. "Une tres riche sepulture": in Old St Paul's Cathedral, London. *Church Monuments* XXV: 7–35.

Krochalis, Jeanne. 1997–98. *Magna Tabula*: The Glastonbury Tablets. *Arthurian Literature* 15/16, (eds.) James P. Carley and Felicity Riddy, 93–183 and 41–82.

Marks, Richard. 2009. Picturing Word and Text in the Late Medieval Parish Church. In *Image, Text and Church, 1380–1600: Essays for Margaret Aston*, (eds.) Linda Clark, Maureen Jurkowski and Colin Richmond, 162–88. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies.

McRae, Andrew. 2009. *Literature and Domestic Travel in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Null, Ashley. 2003. John Redman, the Gentle Ambler. In *Westminster Abbey Reformed 1540–1640*, (eds.) Charles S. Knighton and Richard Mortimer. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Quadflieg, Helga. 2002. Approved Civilities and the Fruits of Peregrination—Elizabethan and Jacobean Travelers and the Making of Englishness. In *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600–2000*, (eds.)

Hartmut Berghoff, Barbara Korte, Ralf Schneider and Christopher Harvie, 21–45. Palgrave: Macmillan.

Sherlock, Peter. 2005. Henry VII's "orbis miraculum": Royal Commemoration at Westminster Abbey 1500–1700. In *Rituals, Images and Words: Varieties of Cultural Expression in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Francis William Kent and Charles Zika, 177–99. Turnhout: Brepols.

———. 2008. *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Stanley, Arthur Penryth. 1882. *Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey*, 5th edition. London: John Murray.

Woolf, Daniel. 2003. *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500–1730*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER 17

The Pope's Merchandise and the Jesuits' Trumpery: Catholic Relics and Protestant Polemic in Post-Reformation England

Alexandra Walsham

In 1641, on the eve of the outbreak of the English Civil War, an etching entitled *This Burden Backe to Rome* was published in London by Wenceslas Hollar (Fig. 17.1). It depicts the bearded figure of Father Time with his trademark scythe and hour glass, carrying a triple-tiared Pope, St Peter's sceptre, and crossed keys on his "aged backe", together with a "Pedlars packe" and "trunke of trash & Romish Trumperies, Deluding showes and infernall forgeries". The verses below tell us that he is transporting this "load of vaniti", which includes a bishop's mitre and clerical biretta, back to the sink of vice and iniquity that is the seat of Antichrist. Deploying a miscellaneous collection of physical objects as a visual symbol of the evils of popery, this broadside embodies the earnest Protestant hope that all tangible remnants of England's popish past will be swept away as the prelude to the triumphant consummation of her prolonged and imperfect Reformation.[1]

The assumptions that underpin this striking image have proved extremely resilient. Following in the footsteps of early modern polemicists, modern scholars have paid relatively little attention to the material culture of Roman Catholicism in early modern England. They have tended to echo the prejudices of contemporaries in regarding relics, sacramentals, and vestments as subjects unworthy of serious academic enquiry. Until the mid-twentieth century, their study was largely a fringe activity carried out by devout writers in the recusant history tradition, whose endeavours only served to confirm their credulity in the eyes of their Protestant counterparts.[2] Recently, however, historians of both the Middle Ages and the era of the Counter Reformation have begun to

1 Wenceslas Hollar [attrib.], *This burden backe to Rome* ([London, 1641]). British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, Satires 300.

2 For example, Bede Camm, *Forgotten Shrines: An Account of Some Old Catholic Halls and Families in England, and of Relics and Memorials of the English Martyrs* (London: MacDonald, 1910), esp. 355–81.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2015 | DOI 10.1163/9789004299016_019

This Burden backe to *Rome*, I'le beare againe;
From thence it came, there let it ſtill remaine,
When Times Great Maker (the most high Eternall) In mercy look'd from his Throne ſupernall: And ſaw the Euils which began to grow In his deare Vine here Militant below,
He to his daughter Truth gaue ſtreight Command That ſhee thoſe dang'rous Errors ſhould withſtand Then vp I tooke vpon my aged backe, This load of Vanity, this Pedlers packe
This trunke of traſh & Romiſh Trumperies Deluding ſhowes infernall forgeries And therefore am I hence in poſt this riding To Rome againe, for here is no abiding

FIGURE 17.1 *Wenceslas Hollar*, This Burden Backe to Rome (*London, 1641*), *woodcut.* BY PERMISSION OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM, AN812151001.

subject them to more sophisticated scrutiny. Approached as entities that hover on the blurred and porous boundary between persona and thing, subject and object, and which occupy a liminal position between the realms of the human and divine, these mundane material items rendered precious and irreplaceable

by their provenance and history are now yielding compelling new insights.[3] Caroline Walker Bynum and Julia Smith are revealing the capacity of 'Christian materiality' to illuminate the nature and contours of medieval religion, as well as the fundamental tensions within it, while Sylvia Evangelisti, Mary Laven and others are busy investigating the cultural significance of their persisting ubiquity after the Council of Trent.[4] Absorbing ideas drawn from the disciplines of anthropology and art history, they are placing the 'biography' and 'social life' of these sacred things under the spotlight.[5] By contrast the study of Protestant material culture is still in its infancy. This too is a product of presuppositions that are neatly encapsulated in Hollar's polemical print, which generations of scholars have silently internalised: the notion that the Reformation as a movement was inherently hostile to material props and physical stimuli to worship and piety. Both its intense allergy to idolatry and its tendency to present itself as a transcendental religion of the word and spirit rather than one that saw sensuous interaction with physical objects as a route to the divine have conspired to inhibit investigations of the existence, nature and significance of relics and other religious artefacts in reformed societies.

This essay has two interconnected objectives. It seeks to explore the place of relics and other religious objects in Catholic devotion in post-Reformation England in tandem with how they came to be perceived by this officially Protestant society. It examines beliefs alongside collection, treatment and use, and it probes the origin and evolution of attitudes and concepts against the backdrop of the antagonism and conflict engendered and fuelled by the Reformation. It suggests that these developments had some intriguing consequences: they not only led to the formation of an enduring and distinctive nexus between the relic and the commodity; they also helped to link the category of holy matter inextricably with the idea of ephemerality.

---

3 See Elizabeth Robertson and Jennifer Jahner (eds.), *Medieval and Early Modern Devotional Objects in Global Perspective: Translations of the Sacred* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010).

4 Caroline Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe* (New York: Zone Books, 2011); Julia Smith, "Portable Christianity: Relics in the Medieval West (c. 700–1200)", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 181 (2012): 143–67; Sylvia Evangelisti, "Material Culture", in *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, (eds.) Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen and Mary Laven (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), 395–416. Mary Laven is currently working on two projects funded by the Leverhulme Trust and the European Research Council on Catholic material culture in early modern Italy.

5 Arjun Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

Relics and Religious Culture before the Reformation

Relics have been an element of Christian religiosity since the era of the primitive Church.[6] A key component of the cults of the earliest martyrs and of holy persons officially canonised or popularly celebrated as saints, pious veneration of them was underpinned by several assumptions. Respect for the bodies of the dead was rooted in the doctrine of the resurrection—the idea that bodies reduced to dust by natural processes of decomposition would be reunited with souls at the Last Judgement—that the mortality and transience of the skeleton and flesh would be overcome when the Trumpet sounded. A second assumption was that a tiny portion or fragment embodied or stood for the whole. This justified the subdivision of entire bodies into smaller units and their distribution to the faithful, a process that gathered momentum in the late Middle Ages alongside other associated practices such as autopsy and dissection of the corpses of sanctified persons. "Actual and metaphorical partition of holy objects", writes Walker Bynum, "became central to piety".[7] These processes were linked with the enclosure of relics in reliquaries and by procedures for their preservation—ephemeral objects were rendered durable and distinguished from ordinary detritus by the elaborate, expensive metal and jewel containers in which they were encased.[8] Increasingly, relics were regarded as exhibiting properties that defied the natural processes of decay to which bodies were subject. Reports that they were incorruptible and incombustible, resistant to decomposition and fire, proliferated. It was also often alleged that they displayed a capacity to invert the normal order in other respects: they emitted not the stench of rotting flesh but the sweet perfume or odour of sanctity; they bled afresh despite the fact that they were long dead. They behaved in

6 For accessible overviews, see Charles Freeman, *Holy Bones Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011); James Robinson, *Finer than Gold: Saints and Relics in the Middle Ages* (London: British Museum Press, 2011).

7 Quotation from Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality*, 192. On the practices of bodily partition and pious dissection, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 320–9; Katharine Park, "Relics of a Fertile Heart: The 'Autopsy' of Clare of Montefalco", in *The Material Culture of Sex, Procreation, and Marriage in Premodern Europe*, (eds.) Anne L. McClanan and Karen Rosoff Encarnación (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 115–33.

8 See Martina Bagnoli et al. (eds.), *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe* (London: British Museum Press, 2010).

ways that implied they were living and animate objects rather than immutable matter.[9]

The same was true of the plethora of secondary or contact relics: hallowed material objects engendered by touching sanctified remains. These were especially important in the case of Christ and the Virgin Mary, both of whom were believed to have been assumed bodily into heaven—hence the multiplication of relics of the true cross, crown of thorns, holy blood, and manger of the infant Christ, as well as the milk, girdle and holy house of the Mother of God. It also applied to the transubstantiated Eucharist—the ultimate relic of the body and blood, miraculously recreated each time mass was celebrated. This found striking expression in the phenomenon of the bleeding host: often linked with anti-semitic tales of sacrilegious desecration, in the fifteenth century this engendered a series of flourishing cults.[10]

Relics must also be situated on a continuum with sacramentals—objects hallowed by virtue of ecclesiastical rituals of sanctification, such as the wax tablets impressed with the figure of the lamb of God known as the *agnus dei* blessed by the papacy and portable devotional items like rosaries.[11] Nor is it helpful to demarcate them too sharply from religious images. The distinction between real instantiations and mere representations of the sacred was no less blurred, as weeping statues and moving crucifixes such as the Rood of Boxley reveal. The case of Veronica's veil (a cloth miraculously impressed with the outline of Christ's face) is further evidence of the difficulty of drawing hard and fast boundaries. Nor did the advent of printing and the capacity for mass mechanical reproduction necessarily undermine the aura of sanctity in the way Walter Benjamin argued so influentially.[12] On the contrary, it might be suggested that print enabled people to venerate relics and hallowed images

9 Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality.* See also G. J. C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist: A Process of Mutual Interaction* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), esp. ch. 5.

10 Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 26–45; Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality*, 171–6.

11 On sacramentals, see R. W. Scribner, "Cosmic Order and Daily Life: Sacred and Secular in Pre-Industrial German Society" and "Ritual and Popular Belief in Catholic Germany at the Time of the Reformation", both reproduced in his *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987), 1–16, 17–47.

12 John Dillenger, *Images and Relics: Theological Perceptions and Visual Images in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, trans. J. A. Underwood (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2008).

vicariously and provided those who purchased and possessed them with the opportunity to gain indulgences without undertaking arduous pilgrimages to them. One relevant development is the emergence of illustrated catalogues of relics, such as those at Bamberg, Nuremberg, and, even more famously, the massive 19,000 strong collection of the Elector Frederick of Saxony.[13]

Caroline Walker Bynum contends that the late Middle Ages saw the paradoxical coexistence of two apparently opposing tendencies: unprecedented enthusiasm for material sacrality alongside renewed doubt, scepticism and suspicion about its compatibility with true spirituality. She identifies "an intensifying rejection and an intensifying revering of matter as the locus of the divine".[14] Implicit in Christian theology from the beginning and articulated by Guibert of Nogent in the twelfth century,[15] this unease and ambivalence about material culture and about the capacity of relic worship to spill over into superstition re-emerged in the writings of humanists like Erasmus and of heretics such as the Lollard followers of John Wyclif. The former reproved the external piety of his day and its physical props as manifestations of *vanitas*; the latter fiercely criticised a religion that encouraged the veneration of crumbling bones, wooden stocks and stones, replicating the idolatry committed by the ancient heathens.[16] Worries about forgery and fabrication and about the rampant commodification of hallowed remains and their sumptuous decoration and opulent display became more overt and vocal.[17]

These polemical themes fused and intertwined in early Reformation England and were further reinforced by vehement Protestant assaults launched by

13 See Robinson, *Finer than Gold*, 63 and figs. 34, 38, 39; Bagnoli et al., *Treasures of Heaven*, 224–26, and catalogue entries 125–9.

14 Walker Bynum, *Christian Materiality*, 285.

15 Guibert of Nogent, *Monodies and On the Relics of Saints: The Autobiography and A Manifesto of a French Monk from the Time of the Crusades*, trans. Joseph Mcalhany and Jay Rubinstein (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2011).

16 See *The Whole Familiar Colloquies of Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam*, (ed.) and trans. Nathan Bailey (London: Hamilton, Adams, 1877), "The Religious Pilgrimage", 238–57; Alexander Nagel, "The Afterlife of the Reliquary", in Bagnoli et al., *Treasures of Heaven*, 211–22, at 211. On the complexity of Wycliffite attitudes, see Robyn Malo, "Behaving Paradoxically? Wycliffites, Shrines and Relics", in *Wycliffite Controversies*, (eds.) Mishtooni Bose and J. Patrick Hornbeck II (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 193–210; and more broadly her *Relics and Writing in Late Medieval England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

17 On relics as commodities, see Patrick Geary, "Sacred Commodities: The Circulation of Medieval Relics", in his *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994).

Luther, Calvin and the Swiss reformers.[18] The Henrician regime coordinated a concerted campaign to expose renowned relics as delusions and fakes (such as the blood of Hailes, revealed to be that of a drake) and publicly destroyed cult objects to demonstrate theatrically that they were nothing more than ordinary matter.[19] In the wake of these scandals, the Catholic Church displayed embarrassment and caution and stepped back from openly promoting relic devotion. Another index and symptom of this was a hiatus in canonisation.[20] However, this phase of restraint soon gave way to a militant reaffirmation of the validity of the cult of saints and relics by the Council of Trent in 1563. Although it acknowledged the danger of superstition, sought to regulate disorder and abuse, and tighten up measures for authentication, it simultaneously upheld reverence for hallowed remains as entirely fitting features of Christian devotion.[21] The later sixteenth-century resurgence of relic culture was greatly assisted by the discovery of the catacombs of Priscilla in 1578 and the following century and a half saw the translation of hundreds of the martyrs' bones to locations across the continent, including cities and territories that had lost their own to the ravages of iconoclasm.[22] Rome now competed with Cologne (the centre of the cult of St Ursula and the 11,000 virgins) as a major relic warehouse, but these imported holy remains were often eclipsed by those of indigenous and local heroes. For instance, the fourteenth-century Czech Saint Nepomuk, famous for his incorruptible tongue became the focus of a vibrant cult in the wake of the vigorous re-catholicisation of Bohemia by a potent combination of force and persuasion after 1621.[23] Relic piety became a hallmark of the Catholic pretensions of the Habsburg king Philip II and a

18 See my "Skeletons in the Cupboard: Relics after the English Reformation", in *Relics and Remains*, (ed.) Alexandra Walsham, Past and Present Supplement 5 (2010): 121–43.

19 Peter Marshall, "Forgery and Miracles in the Henrician Reformation", *Past and Present* 178 (2003): 39–73.

20 On which, see Peter Burke, "How to Become a Counter Reformation Saint", reproduced in *The Counter Reformation: The Essential Readings*, (ed.) David M. Luebke (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 130–42, at 131.

21 H. J. Schroeder (ed.) and trans., *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent* (Rockford, IL: Tan Books, 1978 edn), 216–17.

22 Trevor Johnson, "Holy Fabrications: The Catacomb Saints and the Counter Reformation in Bavaria", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47.2 (1996): 274–97; Simon Ditchfield, "Martyrs on the Move: Relics as Vindicators of Local Diversity in the Tridentine Church", in *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, (ed.) Diana Wood, Studies in Church History 30 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), 283–94.

23 Howard Louthan, *Converting Bohemia: Force and Persuasion in the Catholic Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 280–300; Howard Louthan, "Tongues,

key dimension of programmes for the sanctification of Catholic communities, nations and states.[24]

Relics and the English Counter Reformation

English Catholic exiles and missionary priests keenly defended practices condemned by their Protestant opponents as superstitious and idolatrous. Gregory Martin's *Roma Sancta* lovingly catalogued the famous relics in the churches of Rome and his *Treatise of Christian Peregrination* castigated the heretics for their incredulity: turning the reformers' stress on the intangibility of the divine on its head, he accused them of exceeding the fault of the doubting apostle Thomas himself and refusing to believe in holy things even when they could touch, handle and see them.[25] The Jesuit Henry Garnet added a spirited defence of relics and hallowed and sanctified creatures as forms of "spiritual medicine" and "celestial food" to his translation of Peter Canisius's influential catechism for the edification of English readers.[26]

But in the context of proscription and persecution it was difficult to sustain the kind of public relic cult that typically flourished in Catholic countries. Successive sets of Reformation statutes and injunctions ordered the removal of relics and monuments of superstition, so that no memory of the same remained, and the violent purges of the middle decades of the sixteenth century led to the obliteration and destruction of many thousands of hallowed remains preserved in cathedrals, monasteries and churches.[27] The Elizabethan

---

Toes and Bones: Remembering Saints in Early Modern Bohemia", in *Relics and Remains*, (ed.) Walsham, 167–83.

24 Guy Lazure, "Possessing the Sacred: Monarchy and Identity in Philip II's Relic Collection at the Escorial", *Renaissance Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (2007): 58–93; Katrina Olds, "Visions of the Holy in Counter Reformation Spain: The Discovery and Creation of Relics in Arjona, c. 1628", in *The "Vision Thing": Studying Divine Intervention*, (eds.) William A. Christian and Gabor Klaniczay (Budapest: Collegium Budapest, 2009), 135–56; Katrina Olds, "The Ambiguities of the Holy: Authenticating Relics in Seventeenth-Century Spain", *Renaissance Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2012): 135–84.

25 Gregory Martin, *Roman Sancta* (*1581*), trans. George Bruner Parks (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1969), chs 5, 6, 13–14; idem, *A Treatise of Christian Peregrination* (1583 [Paris: for R. Verstegan, 1597]), sig. C3r.

26 Peter Canisius, *A Summe of Christian Doctrine: Composed in Latin*, (ed.) and trans. Henry Garnet ([London?]: [Henry Garnet's Press], [1592–6]), quotation at 495.

27 See, for example, Edward Cardwell (ed.), *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1844), i. 6–7, 17, 212, 221.

clerical hierarchy conceded that the rule that altars on which the mass was celebrated should contain relics could be relaxed because they were in short supply.[28] But many did survive: saved and salvaged by the faithful in the earnest hope that one day they would live to see the Church of Rome reinstated and that they could then be returned to the buildings that had originally housed them. Some probably were during the short-lived Counter Reformation of Queen Mary I before being taken back into safe-keeping after the accession of her half-sister Elizabeth. It is clear that many came into the hands of wealthy gentry: the memoirs of the Jesuit John Gerard recorded how he acquired the relics of St Thomas of Canterbury and Holy Thorn from Catholic laity who had rescued them from the Henrician Reformation and how the arm bone of the virgin martyr St Vita was given to him by a Protestant parson, in whose parish church it still resided.[29] These and others were taken across the Channel to religious houses and colleges abroad, where there was less risk that they would be confiscated during raids on recusant houses and burnt on bonfires of vanities. They were eventually repatriated to England after Catholic emancipation in the nineteenth century.[30]

However, it was sometimes a struggle to persuade laypeople to relinquish these material remnants of Catholicism's glorious past, which were simultaneously conduits of emotion and memory and potent sources of thaumaturgic power. In the constant presence of danger, there were strong incentives for wishing to keep them in close proximity. One Staffordshire yeoman, for instance, kept the relics of St Chad in his bedhead.[31] There are also many early modern examples of the medieval practice of fragmentation. Post-Reformation Catholics divided and cut off pieces to send as gifts and tokens to relatives: John Poyntz gave the arm bone of St Thomas Cantilupe to his sister in Paris, a companion of Mary Ward and later third superior of the Institute, in Paris, in 1651.[32] The travels of these relics around Europe and their dispersal operated

28 P. J. Holmes (ed.), *Elizabethan Casuistry*, Catholic Record Society 67 (1981), 81–3.

29 John Gerard, *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan*, (ed.) and trans. Philip Caraman (London: Longmans, Green, 1951), 49–50. See also Anne M. Myers, "Father John Gerard's Object Lessons: Relics and Devotional Objects in *Autobiography of a Hunted Priest*", in *Catholic Culture in Early Modern England*, (eds.) Ronald Corthell, Frances E. Dolan, Christopher Highley, and Arthur F. Marotti (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 216–35.

30 There are significant collections at Stonyhurst, Downside, and Ushaw.

31 Henry Foley (ed.), *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, 7 vols in 8 (London: Burns and Oates, 1877–84), ii. 231.

32 Virginia C. Raguin and Naomi Reed Kline, "Relics and the Two Thomases: Thomas of Canterbury and Thomas of Hereford as Bishop Martyr and Bishop Confessor", in *Catholic*

as a metaphor for the condition of English Catholicism: a mobile diaspora that was nevertheless part of a monolithic institution and a united community that would exist in perpetuity.[33] And where ancient relics had been casualties of Protestant iconoclasm, empty reliquaries sometimes functioned as surrogates. In Elizabethan Somerset, William Weston met an old man who revered the linen case in which one of the nails that had pinned Christ to the crucifix at Calvary had once been preserved after this had been removed as a magnet for superstition by the Protestant Bishop John Jewel.[34] Voids became a fresh focus of veneration. Alongside this we may note the powerful fillip that the Reformation delivered to Catholic antiquarianism: it served to stimulate efforts to preserve the remembrance of physical objects that had been victims of the Protestant war against idols. Thus Sir Thomas Habington's mid seventeenth-century "Survey of Worcestershire" sought to "preasarve within thease paper walles what that stronge rocke cannot keepe".[35] His comments referred to holy places in the landscape, but the sentiment applies equally well to other material relics and saintly remains, whose destruction tended to be conceptualised as a kind of martyrdom. Thus an anonymous account of the "Rites of Durham" written in 1593 ascribed to the recusant William Claxton carefully recorded for posterity hallowed objects, rituals and spaces associated with St Cuthbert, including his miraculous banner, which had been burnt by Katherine Whittingham, wife of the dean, in "notable contempt & disgrace of all auncyent & goodly Reliques".[36] Such texts functioned as a metaphorical reliquary for memory even where the sacred things themselves had proved ephemeral.

Alongside these medieval relics that had survived against the odds must be placed a second category: the new and ever growing pool of relics associated

---

Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850: Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant History in England and America, (ed.) Virginia C. Raguin (Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross, 2006), 69–78, at 76.

33 Liesbeth Corens is currently working on these themes as part of a Cambridge PhD on English Catholics in the Southern Netherlands c. 1660–1720. I am grateful to her for stimulating discussions.

34 William Weston, *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan*, (ed.) and trans. Philip Caraman (London: Longmans, Green, 1955), 110–12.

35 Thomas Habington, *A Survey of Worcestershire*, (ed.) John Amphlett, 2 vols (Oxford: Worcestershire Historical Society, 1895–9), ii. 18.

36 *Rites of Durham. Being a Description or Brief Declaration of all the Ancient Monuments, Rites, and Customs Belonging or being within the Monastical Church of Durham before the Suppression*, Surtees Society 107 (Durham: Published for the Society by Andrews & co., 1903), 26–7.

with the priests and laypeople who harboured them who were put to the death by the Tudor and Stuart regimes, ostensibly not for religious crimes but political ones, not for heresy but for treason. The earliest of these new martyrs were Thomas More, John Fisher and the Carthusian martyrs: all of them were the subject of vigorous cults within a generation. More's hat and hairshirt have been transmitted down the centuries: the latter was a precious possession of the Bridgettines and accompanied them on their peregrinations to Belgium, Lisbon, and eventually South Brent in Devon.[37] There are many other examples of spontaneous canonisation centuries ahead of the formal beatification of the martyrs by the Church in the twentieth century. In 1572, one William Tessimond was hauled before the High Commission in York for possessing hair from the beard of the disgraced Earl of Northumberland, leader of the Northern Rebellion, which he had cut off when his head was displayed in the tollbooth.[38]

But the pace of relic production stepped up with the arrival of the missionaries trained in the Low Countries in the 1570s and their capture and execution as traitors. Cuthbert Mayne, hung, drawn, and quartered in 1577, was the proto-martyr of the mission, and Edmund Campion's death in 1581 marked the beginning of a period of intense persecution. The executions of these priests and laypeople were witnessed by their followers and co-religionists, who scrambled to gather up mementoes of these men and women, whom they believed had earned themselves a permanent place in paradise. For their part, the authorities made concerted efforts to prevent this: they were determined not to allow durable, material remnants of traitors to be carried away for fear that they would become foci for resistance and militancy. Various steps were taken to prevent this happening: officials were ordered to burn all body parts, garments, and even straw on the scaffold. After the execution of Ralph Corby in 1644, the apron and sleeves of hangman were also destroyed, so that "the Papist dogs . . . might have nothing to keep as relics".[39] As in the case of Thomas Maxfield, put to death at Tyburn in 1616, the mangled limbs of convicted priests

37 Camm, *Forgotten Shrines*, plate facing 370, and 372. See Bede Camm's transcription of list of the Bridgettines' relics in 1738, which were brought back from Lisbon to England in 1809: Downside Abbey, Martyrs Box 4.

38 York, Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, High Commission Act Book 1572–4, fo. 40r–v.

39 Richard Challoner, *Memoirs of Missionary Priests*, (ed.) J. H. Pollen (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1924), 466.

were buried in pits near the gallows, beneath the bodies of common felons and criminals.[40]

However, there was a certain irony at the heart of the Protestant theatre of punishment. The ritual of quartering (a symbolic punishment recalling how these priests had divided and severed the body politic) was intended as the ultimate form of humiliation, but in fact may have helped to make the martyrs' remains more accessible to the faithful. It assisted the process of pious fragmentation and dismemberment that had been integral to the cult of relics since the thirteenth century. Sometimes this process was given supernatural assistance: in 1591 the thumb of Edmund Geninges miraculously detached itself and fell into the hands of a young virgin called Lucy Ridley, who went on to become an Augustinian nun (Fig. 17.2).[41] And if the purpose of these rites of judicial violence was to obliterate all material trace and memory of their victims, they repeatedly had the opposite effect, etching their victims in collective Catholic consciousness for many generations.[42]

Moreover, Catholics went to extraordinary lengths to obtain relics. Cardinal William Allen wrote of the "godly greedy appetite" of people in England and abroad for pieces of the martyrs.[43] Thomas Maxfield's remains were dug up under cover of darkness in a gruesome act of excavation and taken into the custody of the Spanish ambassador, Count Gondomar, who took them back to Spain with him when he completed his diplomatic tour of duty, where they resided until they were translated back to Downside Abbey in the early twentieth century.[44] In Jacobean London the recovery of the martyrs' body parts was in large part coordinated by the Spanish noblewoman Luisa de Carvajal, who employed sophisticated methods to embalm and preserve them.[45] Among the hallowed remains that still survive are Edward Oldcorne's eye (gouged out

40 "The Life and Martyrdome of Mr Maxfield, Priest, 1616", (ed.) J. H. Pollen, in *Miscellanea III*, Catholic Record Society 3 (London, 1906), 30–58, at 47.

41 John Geninges, *The Life and Death of Mr Edmund Geninges, Priest, Crowned with Martyrdome at London the 10. Day of November, in the Yeare M.DXCI* (St Omers: Charles Boscard, 1614), 93–4.

42 Arthur F. Marotti, "Southwell's Remains: Catholicism, Relics, and Print Culture in Early Modern England", in his *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 9–31.

43 William Allen, *A Briefe Historie of the Glorious Martyrdom of XII. Reverend Priests* (Rheims: [J. Foigny?], 1582), fo. cvii v.

44 "Life and Martyrdome of Mr Maxfield, Priest, 1616", (ed.) Pollen, 47.

45 Discussed in Glyn Redworth, "God's Gift? Sacred Relics, Gift Giving, and Luisa de Carvajal's Preparation of the Holy During the Long Reformation", *Nuncius: Journal of the Material*

FIGURE 17.2 *Anon., illustration from John Geninges*, The Life and Death of Mr Edmund Geninges, Priest, Crowned with Martyrdome at London the 10. Day of November, in the Yeare M.DXCI (*St Omers: Charles Boscard, 1614*), *93–4, woodcut.*
BY PERMISSION OF THE MASTER AND FELLOWS OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, C.10.80 [1].

of his head by one of his disciples and encased in a contemporary silver reliquary) (Fig. 17.3)[46] and a wisp of the hair of Anne Line, put to death for sheltering a succession of priests.[47] Others bribed or bargained with officials and executioners to obtain this sacred treasure. In 1616, for instance, a young man bought the stockings of Thomas Atkinson, executed at York, from the hangman, as a relic, while a colleague and confessor of the Benedictine missionary Philip Powell purchased his clothes and shirt for the substantial sum of £4 in 1646. Preserved by his community, the latter's relics were labelled with his name and said to be "wet with his blood and tears".[48]

Many such relics were smuggled out of England to the continent, sent as tokens of these newly minted saints and as testaments to what the exile Richard Verstegan called "the theatre of Calvinist cruelties".[49] Foreign Catholics like the devout youth Antonio de Castro avidly collected the remnants of their blessed English brethren: his "little cabinet" containing various relics was bestowed on John Wilson at St Omer after his premature death, who in turn sent one of them, a fragment of John Almond, to Matthew Kellison, President of the English College at Douai, as a gift in July 1623.[50] Transported across Catholic Europe in letters and packages, these holy fragments helped to forge links, cement connections and transcend the distances that divided the geographically scattered members of the beleaguered and militant churches of Rome. They became "the points of transfer between the history of an individual and the broader history of Catholic tradition . . . beginning with Christ himself".[51] Even as these "martyrs on the move" helped to transmit and vindicate local cults and devotions, they simultaneously bound together those who revered them and functioned as badges of belonging to an international ecclesiastical institution.[52]

---

and Visual History of Science, 27.2 (2012): 270–88. I am grateful to the author for sharing this piece with me in advance of publication.

46 Now at Stonyhurst: described and reproduced in *Held in Trust: 2008 Years of Sacred Culture*, (ed.) Maurice Whitehead (Stonyhurst: St Omers Trust, 2008), 74–5.

47 I am unclear about its present location, but an image of it exists among the Bede Camm papers (Files on the English Martyrs, "Rambler-Wright") at Downside.

48 Challoner, *Memoirs*, 341; Downside Abbey, Bede Camm papers (Files on the English Martyrs, "Padley-Purshall").

49 Richard Verstegan, *Theatrum crudelitatum haereticorum nostril temporis* (Antwerp: Richard Verstegan, 1587).

50 London, Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster: St Edmund's College, Ware, MS 16/9/9.

51 Myers, "Father John Gerard's Object Lessons", 229.

52 See Ditchfield, "Martyrs on the Move".

FIGURE 17.3 *Edward Oldcorne's eye, in contemporary silver reliquary. Stonyhurst College, Lancashire.*
BY PERMISSION OF THE BRITISH JESUIT PROVINCE.

The efforts of Protestant officials to prevent people from carrying off body parts and to demonstrate their ephemerality by destroying them probably had the effect of fostering a high level of interest in secondary relics—in the clothing and other personal belongings of the martyrs. People eagerly collected their spectacles, books, rosaries, *agni dei*, and liturgical equipment (a portable trunk with chalice and chasuble said to have been the Jesuit Edmund Arrowsmith's is preserved at Stonyhurst),[53] together with the letters they wrote from prison and the texts they composed. Even their signatures became sought after as hallowed souvenirs or what Ulinka Rublack has called grapho-relics.[54] The Oxford martyr George Napper's signature, collected by Sir Kenelm Digby in the mid seventeenth century and carefully cut out of another manuscript, is enclosed in a small envelope among the papers of Bede Camm at Downside (Fig. 17.4).[55] Even more remarkably, the calix of the small pink flower Thomas

53 See Whitehead, *Held in Trust*, 70–1.

54 Ulinka Rublack, "Grapho-Relics: Lutheranism and the Materialization of the Word", in *Relics and Remains*, (ed.) Walsham, 144–66.

55 Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Downside Abbey, Bede Camm papers (Files on the English Martyrs, "Queen Elizabeth-Napier"). See Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 167.

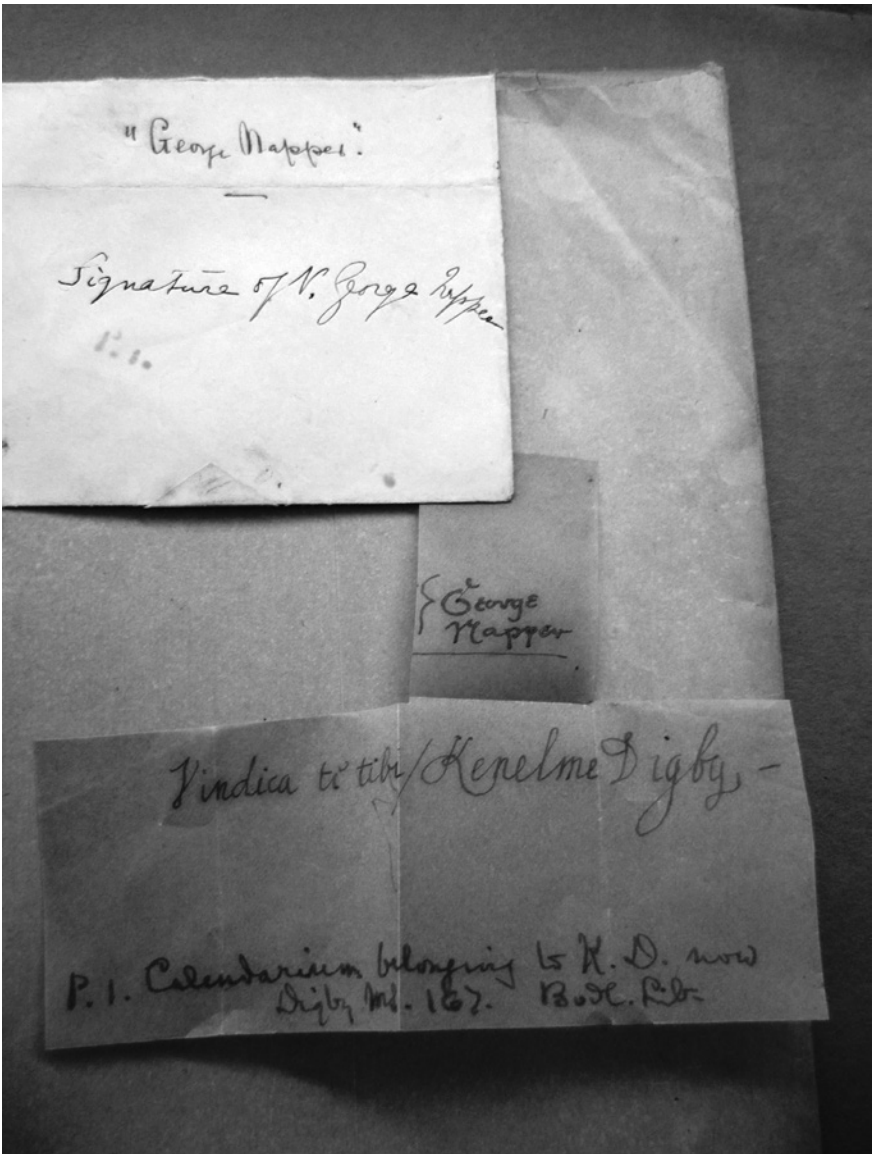
"George Napper"
Signature of V. George Napper
George Napper
Vindica te tibi/Kenelme Digby -
P. 1. Calendarium belonging to K. D. now Digby MS. 167. Bod. Lib.

FIGURE 17.4 *George Napper's signature. Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Downside Abbey, Bede Camm papers* (*Files on the English Martyrs*).
© DOWNSIDE ABBEY TRUSTEES.

Maxfield carried with him to Tyburn and held tightly until he expired has survived at the Westminster Archives. It is wrapped in a folded square of red paper, and kept alongside a letter written by an unknown gentleman to

whom the relic had been given by an eyewitness, from which the names of the writer and recipient have been carefully obliterated.[56] More notoriously, an exquisite image of Henry Garnet, convicted for complicity in the Gunpowder Plot in 1606, was said to have appeared on a piece of straw stained with his blood. Catholics saw the mysterious miniature engraving of his portrait on this ephemeral relic as evidence of the hand at God at work; Protestants claimed that it was an ingenious and deceptive example of human workmanship, an example of the forgery and fabrication perpetrated by a religion whose progenitor was the devil, that arch magician and father of lies.[57]

Claims of incorruptibility and incombustibility became associated with many of these relics. Everard Hanse's heart was said to have leapt out of the flames in 1581; William Ward's was providentially preserved from incineration in 1641 and remained untainted for 15 days, while the handkerchief in which it was carried from the scene remained mysteriously intact; and the bowels of Charles Baker, put to death in the wake of the Popish Plot scare in 1679, refused to burn despite extra faggots being flung upon them.[58] The remains of Peter Wright, executed in 1651, gave off a fragrant perfume which could only have come from heaven.[59] After hanging a full year in the open air, when the shoulder and attached arm of Robert Sutton was taken down from its pike all the flesh was found to be consumed, except the thumb and forefinger with which he had consecrated the host, which was regarded as a striking miracle in defence of the contested doctrine of transubstantiation.[60] The Jesuit Annual Letters are filled with reports of the healing and other wonders wrought by these holy remnants. The hand of Edmund Arrowsmith was widely sought after in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Lancashire and cured a variety of ailments from paralysis to hysterical fits. In 1910, a Liverpool man was cured of

56 The letter and relic are now preserved in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster: St Edmund's College, Ware, MS 16/9/7. See "Life and Martyrdome of Mr Maxfield, Priest, 1616", (ed.) Pollen, 58.

57 See London, B[ritish] L[ibrary], Additional MS 21203, fos 22r-23v; Philip Caraman, *Henry Garnet 1555–1606 and the Gunpowder Plot* (London: Longmans, 1964), 443–7. London, The National Archives, State Papers 14/21/5 is a narrative by a Catholic eyewitness, with a portrait of the straw engraved by Johann Wierix.

58 Challoner, *Memoirs*, 16, 390–2, 561.

59 Foley, *Records of the English Province*, iii. 548–9.

60 J. H. Pollen (ed.), *Unpublished Documents Relating to the English Martyrs*, vol. I *1584–1603*, Catholic Record Society 5 (London, 1908), 291.

warts and a young girl of the illness that had crippled her by being rubbed with a piece of holy linen in which the relic was wrapped.[61]

These stories also reveal that these new post-Reformation relics, like surviving medieval ones, often remained in the possession of the laity, despite clerical attempts to regulate their veneration in line with Tridentine prescriptions. Devout men and women became their custodians, keeping them in caskets in their homes and sometimes carrying them around in their pockets. An embroidered box dating from the second quarter of the seventeenth century contains part of the shoulder blade and upper arm of one of the four priests martyred at Durham in 1590 (Edmund Duke, Richard Hill, John Hog and Richard Holliday) and bears a Latin inscription referring to Psalm 34: 21 ("He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken").[62] The Countess of Arundel wore a relic of Robert Southwell intimately about her person and two sisters whose chamber was raided in the later 1580s were revealed to have a variety of "superstitious reliques", including a "litle clout wrapped in paper with a droppe of bloud".[63] Similarly, under interrogation in 1613 John Cotton of Warblington confessed that a reliquary of crimson damask found in this study had been given to him by a missionary, but that he had augmented its contents with a piece of black bone obtained "beyond the seas" and believed to be linked with St Christopher and part of the body of the priest Mark Barkworth (alias Lambert) executed at Tyburn in 1601. The chest also contained remains labelled with the names of the Gunpowder Plot traitors, including Robert Catesby and Sir Everard Digby, though Cotton insisted that the rib associated with the latter actually belonged to the dead recusant John Rigby.[64] To be found in possession of objects of this kind was incriminating evidence of adherence to a false religion, if not a telltale sign of political disloyalty.

Relics were by no means the only material focus of Catholic emotion and devotion. In England, as in Europe, the desire for sacramentals—*agni dei*, medals, crucifixes, holy grains, and St Ignatius water—was apparently

61 Foley, *Records of the English Province*, ii. 61–2, 64, 69; Downside Abbey, Martyrs Box 4 (letter of Miss Elizabeth Almond, 21 March 1910).

62 Raguin and Kline, "Relics and the Two Thomases", 72–3, 78. This is preserved at Stonyhurst.

63 Marotti, *Religious Ideology*, 219, n. 60; London, BL, Lansdowne MS 50, fol. 164r.

64 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Ancaster Preserved at Grimsthorpe* (London: HMSO, 1907), 363–4; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Downshire preserved at Easthampstead Park, Berkshire*, vol. 4, *Papers of William Trumbull the Elder January 1613–August 1614*, (ed.) A. B. Hinds (London: HMSO, 1940), 152.

insatiable.[65] Robert Southwell wrote to Robert Persons in 1586 calling for thousands of *agni dei* to be sent to England: such was the demand from the people that "we are unable to gratify them".[66] These and other sanctified objects were widely employed by the missionary priests as instruments of indoctrination and conversion as well as sources of thaumaturgic power, as the long succession of anecdotes about their role in extinguishing fires and remedying ailments in Jesuit memoranda reveals.[67] The fact that they had been blessed by the pope made acquisition and use of them a blatant act of sedition and a statute of 1571 linked distribution of any such "vain and superstitious things" directly with dissemination of Pius V's bull excommunicating Elizabeth I and absolving her subjects from allegiance to her.[68] Along with rosaries, which the Elector Maximilian of Bavaria made it compulsory for his subjects to own in 1601, they became confessional identifiers and badges of belonging.[69] Some, like Lady Magdalen Montagu of Battle in Sussex, wore them openly; others secreted them in the folds of their clothing to evade detection.[70] The relative scarcity of priests in England made such items a crucial substitute for regular access to sacramental grace and absolution.

The case of John Gerard, who made a rosary for himself out of discarded orange peel,[71] is indicative of the creative improvisations Catholics made to preserve their devotional lives in these extreme circumstances. Perishable goods had to be a substitute for more durable materials like beads or wood. Thomas Lusher, a pupil at St Omer crafted a tiny wooden shrine two and a half inches in height, which when opened shows the instruments of the passion and is dated 1623. This too could readily be hidden (Fig. 17.5).[72] Even more intriguing is a playing card discovered by Richard Williams in the archive at Hatfield House, the reverse of which resembles a religious triptych. Found

65 See my "Miracles and the Counter Reformation Mission to England", *Historical Journal* 46, no. 4 (2003): 779–815. See also Trevor Johnson, "Blood, Tears and Xavier-Water: Jesuit Missionaries and Popular Religion in the Eighteenth-Century Upper Palatinate", in *Popular Religion in Germany and Central Europe, 1400–1800*, (eds.) Bob Scribner and Trevor Johnson (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 183–202.

66 Pollen, *Unpublished Manuscripts*, 319.

67 See, e.g., Foley, *Records of the English Province*, ii. 567; iv. 616; vii (2).1100, 1136.

68 13 Eliz. c. 2.

69 Trevor Johnson, *Magistrates, Madonnas and Miracles: The Counter Reformation in the Upper Palatinate* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 224.

70 Richard Smith, *An Elizabethan Recusant House Comprising the Life of the Lady Magdalen Viscountess Montague (1538–1608)*, (ed.) A. C. Southern (London: Sands, 1954), 44, 47.

71 Gerard, *Autobiography*, 117.

72 Raguin, *Catholic Collecting*, 120–1. This is preserved at Stonyhurst.

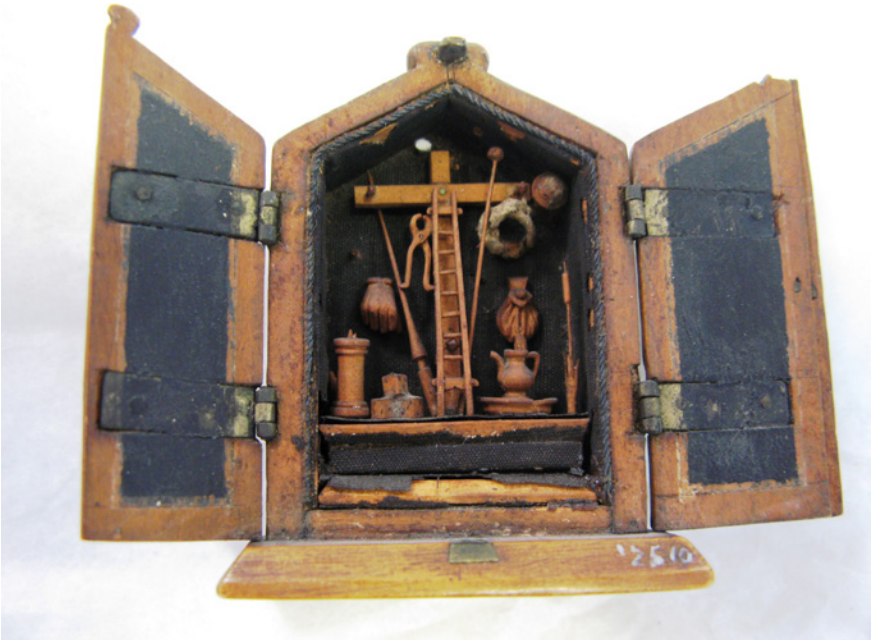

FIGURE 17.5 *Thomas Lusher, Miniature wooden shrine for devotion to the Passion, 1623. Stonyhurst College, Lancashire.*
BY PERMISSION OF THE GOVERNORS OF STONYHURST COLLEGE.

in the comb case of one of the Duke of Norfolk's men, it was confiscated by Sir Owen Lieutenant of the Tower, as evidence of his infatuation with popery.[73] In this instance, the ephemeral medium of paper has been used to create a very personal devotional tool. This may be compared with the fascinating artefacts that survive from the period of intense persecution of the Japanese Christians in the seventeenth century. Designed to deceive the viewer, these Kirishitan relics and their English counterparts might be described as components of a material culture of dissimulation.[74]

More generally, printed and manuscript texts played a vitally important part in the lives of English Catholics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. If they functioned as dumb preachers and surrogate priests, they were

73 Richard L. Williams, "Contesting the Everyday: The Cultural Biography of a Subversive Playing Card", in *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, (eds.) Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 241–56.

74 Hidesaburo Suzuki, *Crypto-Kirishitan Relics in Japan* ([Kyoto]: Gen'ichido, 1961).

also important aids to private and domestic devotion and they too could breed a degree of autonomy and independence that was in tension with clerical direction.[75] Books imported from the Continent that contained guidance on using the rosary sometimes included fold-out diagrams, such as the one incorporated in John Bucke's *Instructions for the Use of the Beades* (1589), which was dedicated to Lady Anne Hungerford.[76] Such images could function as a two-dimensional substitute for the real thing. The fact that only a few pictures of this type survive may be testimony not merely to their vulnerability but also to the possibility that many of them were simply worn out by use. Here the boundary between sacred object and printed ephemera begins to break down. Attention might also be drawn to medieval images of pity from which the indulgences have been struck out. As Martha Driver has commented, the mutilation of these prints did not render them unusable. Paradoxically, it helped to safeguard at least some of them from complete destruction.[77] And their defacement may even have enhanced the aura of sanctity that surrounded these illicit and fragile texts in the wake of the Reformation.

Relics as Ephemera

The final part of this essay traces a different set of interconnections between the materiality, ephemerality, sanctity and memory. It turns attention to how this residual and resurgent relic culture was perceived by the Protestant authorities and populace and to the techniques by which its appeal was discredited and defused. At the heart of Protestantism's vociferous polemical assault upon the cult of relics was a corrosive critique of material Christianity—a critique of medieval Catholicism's emphasis upon external physical objects rather than interior contemplation of intangible truths, combined with the claim that veneration of them was tantamount to pagan idolatry. Protestants equated this with heathen worship of trees, rocks and springs and of elaborately wrought artefacts manufactured by human hands like the brazen serpent. God was a pure spirit who could not be envisaged or depicted as a person or a thing. John Calvin produced one of the most scurrilous tracts on this topic—a

75 See my "Domme Preachers? Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print", *Past and Present* 168 (2000): 72–123.

76 John Bucke, *Instructions for the Use of the Beades* (Louvain: [I. Maes], 1589).

77 Martha W. Driver, *The Image in Print: Book Illustration in Late Medieval England and its Sources* (London: British Museum Press, 2004), ch. 6, esp. 204. See also Raguin, *Catholic Collecting*, 90.

savagely comic denunciation of the famous relics littered across the churches of the Continent, the main objective of which was to reveal that the vast majority of these were counterfeit. The brain of St Peter, he declared, was in fact a marble stone and many hallowed bones were those of asses and dogs rather than men and women. Too many, he said, simply suspended disbelief. They "shut their eyes through superstition, to the ende, that they seing should see nothyng at all: that is to say that they dare not looke in good earnest to consider what the thing is". On other words, they deliberately avoided identifying relics as the mere material objects they were. They mistook the worthless detritus of daily existence for precious conduits to the divine. He urged them to lift the veil from their eyes and recognise the stupidity of venerating a pile of rubbish. The dominant tone of Calvin's text is one of disgust.[78]

The vocabulary deployed in Stephen Withers' English translation of Calvin's tract should be underlined. Mimicking the French, he repeatedly uses the words "trash", "merchandise", "baggage", "gear", and "vain trifles" to undermine the relics he describes.[79] The same derogatory language saturates the English translation of the Leiden professor John Polyander's *Disputation against the Adoration of the Reliques of Saints Departed* (1611), which Henry Hexham dedicated to Lady Vere, a descendent of the family linked with "unholy blood of Hales", to unveil the "divelish cousenage" of the papists in devising this cult. The purpose of these texts is metaphorically to reduce relics to the status of mere ephemera.[80] The sacred remnants revered by Roman Catholics are polemically conflated with frivolous consumables of negligible value and little use. Items once regarded as transcendent and priceless are reconceptualised as economic objects. In a society in which the impulse for the acquisition of material goods was rapidly expanding, they are contemptuously redefined as cheap commodities.

This terminology find a further telling echo in the central documents of the English Reformation themselves. The letters of the Henrician commissioners for the dissolution of the monasteries deploy a host of similarly sarcastic nouns and adjectives: in 1538 for instance Dr London reported to Thomas Cromwell that he had pulled down the image of Our Lady of Caversham and taken away

78 John Calvin, *A Very Profitable Treatise . . . Declarynge what Great Profit Might Come to al Christendome, if there were a Regester Made of all Sainctes Bodies and other Reliques* (London: Rowland Hall, 1561), sig. B1r. See also sig. F4r. For St Peter's brain as a pumice stone, see sig. A8v.

79 Ibid., sigs A2v, 5v, B1v, B2v, B4r, B5r, D7v, E5v, G2r.

80 John Polyander, *A Disputation against the Adoration of the Reliques of Saints Departed*, trans. Henry Hexham (Dordrecht: George Walters, 1611), sigs A2r–3r.

all the "prety relykes" and "trynkettes abowt the same" and a few years earlier the visitation articles of Bishop Shaxton of Salisbury had denounced popular reverence of stinking boots, mucky combs, rotten girdles, filthy rags, and other "such pelfry beyond estimation".[81] Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* incorporated a woodcut picture depicting the papists "packing up their Paltry" and shipping away their "trinkets" overseas during the reign of the godly young Josiah Edward VI, when the temple of God had been conscientiously "purged".[82] The same terms and others such as "trumpery" also appear in the Edwardian and early Elizabethan inventories of destroyed and confiscated church goods—popish vestments, ornaments, and other apparatus of worship. A set of returns regarding "superstitious monuments" from Lincolnshire date 1566 includes many references to "popishe peltrie", "trifelinge tromperey", "pelfe of papestrie", "trash" and "bagidg".[83] As Eamon Duffy has remarked, these texts sought "to depersonalise and desacralize the material framework for the medieval system of salvation, to transform the named deposit of meritorious giving into so much saleable lumber".[84] The same phrases are a feature of the official catalogues of items confiscated from the homes of recusants and parcels of contraband goods seized at ports throughout the period which survive among the English State Papers. A list of books, rosary beads, and other suspicious objects found in a fardel opened by a JP and the town constables of Lewes in Sussex in 1582 is endorsed in a contemporary hand "An Inventory of Certaine Popishe stuffe". This included pieces of the bone of St William of Norwich and Mary Magdalene and "a little paper with a piece of old Cotton" marked with the name of Mary Queen of Scots.[85]

Protestants saw relics as part of the category of 'traditions' which had been cunningly devised by the papacy to pull the wool over the eyes of the ignorant laity—a kind of opium of the people. According to the 39 Articles

81 Thomas Wright (ed.), *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of the Monasteries*, Camden Society, 1st ser. 26 (1843), 221–7; W. H. Frere and W. M. Kennedy (eds.), *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Period of the Reformation*, 3 vols, Alcuin Club 14–16 (London: Longmans Green, 1908–10), ii. 59.

82 John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (London: John Day, 1576 edn), 1257.

83 See Edward Pecock (ed.), *English Church Furniture, Ornaments and Decorations, at the Period of the Reformation. As Exhibited in a List of the Goods Destroyed in Certain Lincolnshire Churches, AD1566* (London: Hotten, 1866), 48, 49, 53, 77, 83, 95, 105, 129, 130, 137, 159, 165, 170.

84 Eamon Duffy, "The End of it All: The Material Culture of the Late Medieval English Parish and the 1552 Inventories of Church Goods", in his *Saints, Sacrilege and Sedition: Religion and Conflict in the Tudor Reformations* (London: Continuum, 2012), 109–29, at 114.

85 London, The National Archives, State Papers Domestic 12/156/15.

of Religion the cult of hallowed remains was "a fond thing vainly invented".[86] The reformers contrasted these accumulated traditions with the original fount of Scripture. This usage is neatly encapsulated in the title of Thomas Becon's *The Reliques of Rome* (1563), an extended dissection of the "trifling traditions, croked constitutions", and "fond fantasies" by which the Catholic Church had bamboozled the populace into obedience.[87] These old wives tales and stubborn survivals, Protestant ministers believed, would be rapidly driven into extinction by the advent of the gospel.[88] The sentiment finds visual expression in another image from Foxe, "A Lively picture describing the weight and substaunce of Gods most blessed word agaynst the doctrines and vanities of mans traditions", an image of a set of scales held by the blindfolded figure of Justice, in which the single tome of the bible outweighs all the pope's paraphernalia, notwithstanding the desperate athletic efforts of the devil to drag the pan down.[89] The profundity of Scripture easily wins out over such ephemeral trifles; the title of a later edition dating from 1656 made the substitution "the hey and stubble of Antichrist".[90] It is no coincidence that this woodcut showing "how light is [the] chaffe of Popish toyes" was pasted into a 1572 edition of the writings of Tyndale and other early evangelical martyrs (Fig. 17.6).[91] In the eyes of Protestants the true relics of God's saints were not physical or bodily entities, but rather the edifying and virtuous example which godly men had left behind for posterity, in speech and writing.[92] And supreme among

86 Thirty Nine Articles, article 22.

87 Thomas Becon, *The Reliques of Rome, Contayning all such Matters of Religion, as Have in Times Past bene Brought into the Church by the Pope and his Adherents* (London: John Day, 1563), esp. sig. 1v–2v.

88 See my "Reformed Folklore? Cautionary Tales and Oral Tradition in Early Modern England", in *The Spoken Word: Oral Culture in Britain, 1500–1850*, (eds.) Adam Fox and Daniel Woolf (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 173–95, esp. 174–80; and "Recording Superstition in Early Modern Britain: The Origins of Folklore", in *The Religion of Fools? Superstition Past and Present*, (eds.) S. A. Smith and Alan Knight, Past and Present Supplement 3 (2008), 178–206; Alison Shell, *Oral Culture and Catholicism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), ch. 2.

89 Foxe, *Actes and Monuments*, ii. 771.

90 This edition has not survived. See Malcolm Jones, *The Print in Early Modern England: An Historical Oversight* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 158–9.

91 *A Liuely Picture Describyng the Authoritie and Substaunce of Gods Most Blessed Word, Weyghing agaynst Popish Traditions*, in *The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, Three Worthy Martyrs, and Principall Teachers of this Churche of England* (London: John Day, 1572). The print may also have appeared as a single sheet.

92 William Perkins, *A Reformed Catholike* (Cambridge: John Legat, 1598), 246–7. For a sensitive assessment of how the concept of the relic was reconfigured in post-Reformation

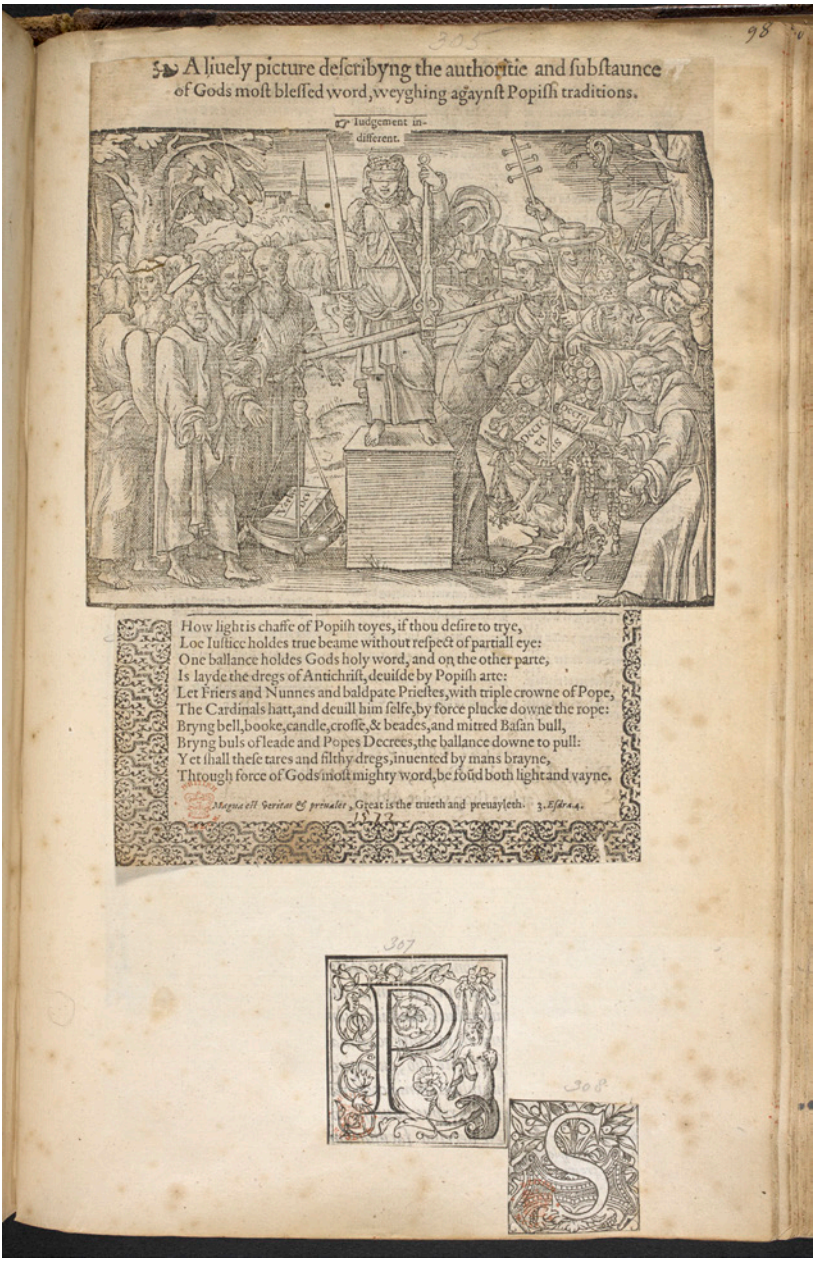
A liuely picture deſcribyng the authoritie and ſubſtaunce
of Gods moſt bleſſed word, weyghing agaynſt Popiſh traditions.
Iudgement in-
different.
How light is chaffe of Popiſh toyes, if thou deſire to trye,
Loe Iuſtice holdes true beame without reſpect of partiall eye:
One ballance holdes Gods holy word, and on the other parte,
Is layde the dregs of Antichriſt, deuiſde by Popiſh arte:
Let Friers and Nunnes and baldpate Prieſtes, with triple crowne of Pope,
The Cardinals hatt, and deuill him ſelfe, by force plucke downe the rope:
Bryng bell, booke, candle, croſſe, & beades, and mitred Baſan bull,
Bryng buls of leade and Popes Decrees, the ballance downe to pull:
Yet ſhall theſe tares and filthy dregs, inuented by mans brayne,
Through force of Gods moſt mighty word, be foūd both light and vayne.
Magna eſt Veritas & prevalet, Great is the trueth and prevayleth. 3. Eſdra. 4.

FIGURE 17.6 *Anon.*, A Lively Picture Describyng the Authoritie and Substaunce of Gods Most Blessed Word, Weyghing agaynst Popish Traditions, *woodcut illustration with handwritten date 1573 found pasted in* The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, Three Worthy Martyrs, and Principall Teachers of this Churche of England (*London: John Day, 1572*).
© THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD, HARLEIAN 5936 (305).

these was the bible itself: according to Thomas Cranmer, scripture was "the most holy relic that remaineth upon earth".[93]

The image of the scales became a pictorial trope, and was frequently republished, especially at junctures of anti-Catholic crisis. It was simplified in a ballad entitled *A New-Yeeres-Gift for the Pope*, the surviving copy of which dates from c. 1625, around the time of the failure of the Spanish match and 'blessed Revolution' in foreign policy which saw England align itself more firmly with Continental Protestant powers. "Come see the difference plainly decided, between Truth and Falshood", it invites its hearers and readers:

> Not all the Popes Trinkets, which here are brought forth,
> Can ballance the Bible for weight, and true worth:
> Your Bells, Beads and Crosses, you see will not doo't,
> Or pull downe your Scale, with the Divell to boot.[94]

The same critical years seem to have seen the first appearance of *The Travels of Time: Loaden with Popish Trumperies*, an earlier version of the image with which this essay began,[95] and of a broadside entitled *A discovery of the Jesuits trumpery, newly packed out of England*. The latter takes the familiar form of a verse catalogue of "trinkets" and "reliques", from indulgences and pardons to holy tapers, holy bells, holy hemp, and "last (to stuffe it full) . . . a Nuns barstard, and a Roring bull", together with a stinging indictment of the swarm of verminous priests who bring such stuff into England, whom it warns will end up locked up in Newgate before being sent to the gallows (Fig. 17.7).[96] This reappeared in 1629 in a translation of Jean Chassanion's *The Merchandises of Popish Priests*, a French diatribe against the "false, deceitfull and counterfeit Wares" marketed

---

society, see Lucy Razzall, "Containers and Containment in Early Modern Writing" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2013).

93 Thomas Cranmer, *A prologue or preface*, in *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*, (ed.) J. E. Cox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), 122, quoted in Matthew Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 265, and see 265–72.

94 *A New-yeeres-gift for the Pope* ([London: n.p., c. 1625]).

95 *The Travels of Time: Loaden with Popish Trumperies: From Great Britaine to Rome* (London: n.p., 1624). On this print and its variants, see Jones, *Print in Early Modern England*, 69–70, 158.

96 *A Discovery of the Jesuits Trumpery, Newly Packed out of England* ([London: Henry Gosson, c. 1625]).

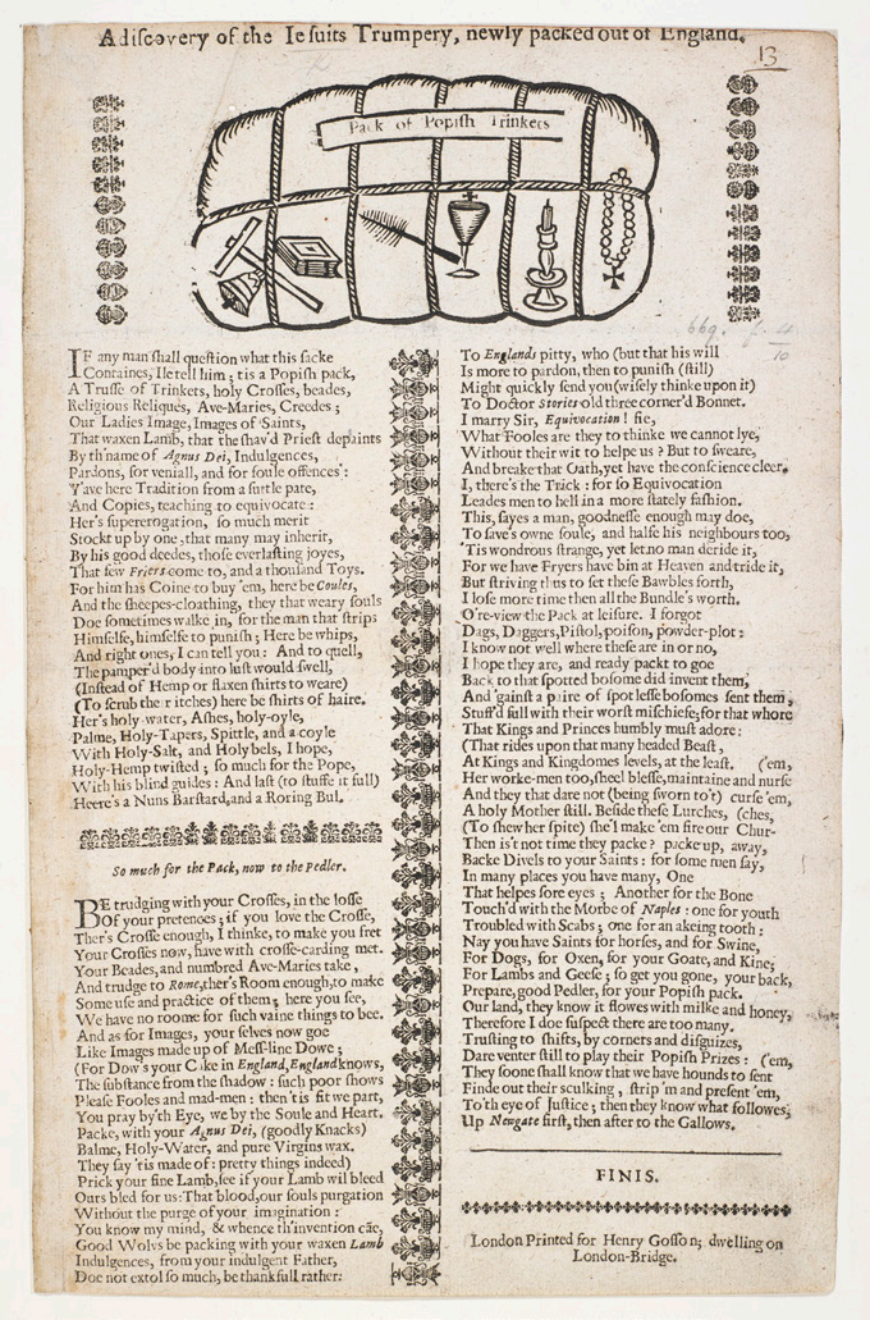
A diſcovery of the Ieſuits Trumpery, newly packed out of England.
13
Pack of Popiſh Trinkets
669. f. 4. 10
IF any man ſhall queſtion what this ſacke
Containes, Ile tell him; tis a Popiſh pack,
A Truſſe of Trinkets, holy Croſſes, beades,
Religious Reliques, Ave-Maries, Creedes;
Our Ladies Image, Images of Saints,
That waxen Lamb, that the ſhav'd Prieſt depaints
By th'name of Agnus Dei, Indulgences,
Pardons, for veniall, and for ſoule offences:
Y'ave here Tradition from a ſurtle pate,
And Copies, teaching to equivocate:
Her's ſupererogation, ſo much merit
Stockt up by one, that many may inherit,
By his good deedes, thoſe everlaſting joyes,
That few Friers come to, and a thouland Toys.
For him has Coine to buy 'em, here be Coules,
And the theepes-cloathing, they that weary ſouls
Doe ſometimes walke in, for the man that ſtrips
Himſelfe, himſelfe to puniſh; Here be whips,
And right ones, I can tell you: And to quell,
The pamper'd body into luſt would ſwell,
(Inſtead of Hemp or flaxen ſhirts to weare)
(To ſcrub their itches) here be ſhirts of haire.
Her's holy water, Aſhes, holy-oyle,
Palme, Holy-Tapers, Spittle, and a coyle
With Holy-Salt, and Holy bels, I hope,
Holy-Hemp twiſted; ſo much for the Pope,
With his blind guides: And laſt (to ſtuffe it full)
Heere's a Nuns Barſtard, and a Roring Bul.
So much for the Pack, now to the Pedler.
BE trudging with your Croſſes, in the loſſe
Of your pretences; if you love the Croſſe,
Ther's Croſſe enough, I thinke, to make you fret
Your Croſſes now, have with croſſe-carding met.
Your Beades, and numbred Ave-Maries take,
And trudge to Rome, ther's Room enough, to make
Some uſe and practice of them; here you ſee,
We have no roome for ſuch vaine things to bee.
And as for Images, your ſelves now goe
Like Images made up of Meſſ-line Dowe;
(For Dow's your Cake in England, England knowes,
The ſubſtance from the ſhadow: ſuch poor ſhowes
Pleaſe Fooles and mad-men: then 'tis fit we part,
You pray by'th Eye, we by the Soule and Heart.
Packe, with your Agnus Dei, (goodly Knacks)
Balme, Holy-Water, and pure Virgins wax.
They ſay 'tis made of: pretty things indeed)
Prick your fine Lamb, ſee if your Lamb wil bleed
Ours bled for us: That blood, our ſouls purgation
Without the purge of your imagination:
You know my mind, & whence th'invention cãe,
Good Wolvs be packing with your waxen Lamb
Indulgences, from your indulgent Father,
Doe not extol ſo much, be thankfull rather:
To Englands pitty, who (but that his will
Is more to pardon, then to puniſh (ſtill)
Might quickly ſend you (wiſely thinke upon it)
To Doctor Stories old three corner'd Bonnet.
I marry Sir, Equivocation! fie,
What Fooles are they to thinke we cannot lye,
Without their wit to helpe us? But to ſweare,
And breake that Oath, yet have the conſcience cleer.
I, there's the Trick: for ſo Equivocation
Leades men to hell in a more ſtately faſhion.
This, ſayes a man, goodneſſe enough may doe,
To ſave's owne ſoule, and halfe his neighbours too,
'Tis wondrous ſtrange, yet let no man deride it,
For we have Fryers have bin at Heaven and tride it,
But ſtriving thus to ſet theſe Bawbles forth,
I loſe more time then all the Bundle's worth.
O're-view the Pack at leiſure. I forgot
Dags, Daggers, Piſtol, poiſon, powder-plot:
I know not well where theſe are in or no,
I hope they are, and ready packt to goe
Back to that ſpotted boſome did invent them,
And 'gainſt a paire of ſpotleſſe boſomes ſent them,
Stuff'd full with their worſt miſchiefe; for that whore
That Kings and Princes humbly muſt adore:
(That rides upon that many headed Beaſt,
At Kings and Kingdomes levels, at the leaſt. ('em,
Her worke-men too, ſhee'l bleſſe, maintaine and nurſe
And they that dare not (being ſworn to't) curſe 'em,
A holy Mother ſtill. Beſide theſe Lurches, (ches,
(To ſhew her ſpite) ſhe'l make 'em fire our Chur-
Then is't not time they packe? packe up, away,
Backe Divels to your Saints: for ſome men ſay,
In many places you have many, One
That helpes ſore eyes; Another for the Bone
Touch'd with the Morbe of Naples: one for youth
Troubled with Scabs; one for an akeing tooth:
Nay you have Saints for horſes, and for Swine,
For Dogs, for Oxen, for your Goate, and Kine;
For Lambs and Geeſe; ſo get you gone, your back,
Prepare, good Pedler, for your Popiſh pack.
Our land, they know it flowes with milke and honey,
Therefore I doe ſuſpect there are too many.
Truſting to ſhifts, by corners and diſguizes,
Dare venter ſtill to play their Popiſh Prizes: ('em,
They ſoone ſhall know that we have hounds to ſent
Finde out their ſculking, ſtrip 'm and preſent 'em,
To'th eye of Juſtice; then they know what followes,
Up Newgate firſt, then after to the Gallowes.
FINIS.
London Printed for Henry Goſſon, dwelling on London-Bridge.

FIGURE 17.7 A Discovery of the Jesuits Trumpery, Newly Packed out of England ([*London: Henry Gosson, c. 1625*]), *woodcut.*
© THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD, 669.F.4 [10].

by these spiritual mountebanks.[97] Persistently comparing relics with material objects that carry monetary value and with goods palmed off on unwary buyers by unscrupulous vendors, they also function as a critical commentary on the evolving world of early modern capitalist production and consumption.

These images circulated again at later moments of Protestant emergency: in 1641 on the eve of the outbreak of the Civil War, and again in the late 1670s in the context of the Popish Plot and Exclusion crisis. A broadside of 1673 advertised a cart load of cheats and fopperies for sale for a penny—just like the ephemeral sheet on which this piece of mockery was printed. In 1688, in the wake of the Glorious Revolution, another anti-Catholic ballad told of the relics that could be purchased from the dismantled Jesuit chapel at the Savoy in London, and a year later a set of satirical playing cards included an image of "A priest marching off with Bag and Baggage"—with a bundle of crucifixes, rosaries and other popish items.[98]

Many of these texts utilise words that have meanings that closely resemble those now carried by the term 'ephemera'. In the early modern period this was largely deployed to describe a fever of short duration or an insect that lived for no more than a day.[99] While I have not yet found it used in an anti-Catholic text, it is significant that its close linguistic cousins were employed interchangeably with the term 'relic', which absorbed some of their negative connotations of transience and triviality. James Kearney and Peter Stallybrass have already traced the etymological journey of trinket, trumpery and trifle out of polemical Protestant discourse and seen this as part of the pre-history of the Enlightenment idea of the fetish. From the mid-eighteenth century, this word was used by ethnographic writers to describe an object used by the pre-literate and indigenous peoples of the new world and the east as an amulet or means of enchantment, or regarded with superstitious dread.[100] Here, I have

97 Jean Chassanion, *The Merchandises of Popish Priests. Or, a Discovery of the Jesuites Trumpery Newly Packed in England* (London, 1629; first edn 1604).

98 *Room for Miracles; or Miracles from Room. A Cart-Load for a Penny* (London: Stout D., 1673); *Religious Reliques, or, the Sale at the Savoy; upon the Jesuits Breaking up their School and Chapel* (London: n.p., 1688). The playing card is reproduced in David Kunzle, *The Early Comic Strip: Narrative Strips and Picture Stories in the European Broadsheet from c.1450 to 1825* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1973), 147.

99 See OED, "ephemera". The etymology is from the Greek. Cf. "paltry", "trumpery", "trinket", "trifle". A keyword search of Early English Books Online reveals that "ephemera" was used in a metaphorical sense in the early modern period, but not in an explicitly religious context.

100 James J. Kearney, "Trinket, Idol, Fetish: Some Notes on Iconoclasm and the Language of Materiality in Reformation England", *Shakespeare Studies* 28 (2000): 257–61; Peter

extended these insights a little further. One way in which post-Reformation Catholicism responded to this set of developments was by reasserting the material durability and robustness of the sacred objects their opponents disparaged: stories of the miraculous incombustibility and indestructability of martyrs' relics may be read as a riposte to Protestantism's insistence upon their literal and metaphorical ephemerality.

Two further points should be made. The first is the observation that godly Protestants like Edward Dering sometimes talked about printed ephemera like ballads, three-halfpenny pamphlets and chapbooks in the same terms as relics: they spoke of them as "childish follies", "witless devices", toys and trifles invented by the devil and pope to seduce the uneducated.[101] The connection between relics and ephemera was also cemented by the state's increasing awareness that these two types of items were being distributed by pedlars and chapmen who "infected with Poperie, carry abroad and disperse superstitious Trumperies". A proclamation of 1618 ordered these individuals of dubious respectability and marginal criminality to be licensed for this very reason. As we have seen, it became a commonplace to depict priests and even the pope himself as disreputable travelling salesmen.[102]

The second point concerns the strategy for dispelling the power of popish relics and trifles embodied by the texts described above. It is a strategy of printing and publishing for the purpose of refutation—of exposing ideas and objects to the naked eye and the clear light of day in order to reveal their falsehood. We see this technique of 'discovery' used in many other anti-Catholic tracts of the period, including the work of Anthony Munday, Samuel Harsnet and John Gee.[103] Sometimes, moreover, it has a pictorial dimension. Bernard Garter's

---

Stallybrass, "Afterword: Persons and Things", in *Medieval and Early Modern Devotional Objects*, (eds.) Robertson and Jahner, 249–56. See also Claire Farago and Carol Komadina Parenteau, "The Grotesque Idol: Imaginary, Symbolic and Real", in *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World*, (eds.) William W. Cole and Rebecca Zorach (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 105–31.

101 Edward Dering, *A Briefe and Necessary Instruction* (London: J. Awdely, 1572), sig. A2v.

102 P. L. Hughes and J. F. Larkin (eds.), *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 393. See Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 178–9.

103 See my "The Spider and the Bee: Printing for Refutation in Tudor England", in *Tudor Books and Readers: Materiality and the Construction of Meaning*, (ed.) John N. King (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 163–90. Anthony Munday, *The English Romayne Lyfe* (London: Iohn Charlewoode, for Nicholas Ling, 1582); Samuel Harsnet, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* (London: James Roberts, 1603); John Gee, *The Foot out of the Snare* (London: H. L[ownes] for Robert Milbourne, 1624).

New yeares gifte, dedicated to the Popes holinesse (1579), for instance, includes a detailed fold-out table depicting "Certaine of the popes merchandise lately sent over into England", as a warning to unwary Protestants who might be deceived by these pretty trifles and toys (Fig. 17.8).[104] Other examples include the facsimile of an indulgenced paper image of the Virgin's foot included in Antony Wotton's defence of an attack on William Perkins' *Reformed Catholike* and Robert Pricket's pamphlet *The Jesuits Miracles, or New Popish Wonders* (1607), the title-page of which reproduced a Catholic image first published in a lengthy Latin treatise, which may also have circulated as a devotional print (Fig. 17.9).[105] One of the ironies of this strategy was that it inadvertently aided the circulation of texts that Protestants regarded as invitations to superstition. It is at least possible that Catholics could have appropriated these polemical publications for alternative purposes and made them the subject of the very reverence which the propagandists sought to dispel. Intended to function as prophylactics against idolatry, they could instead become objects of veneration themselves. In this way these iconoclastic texts could have the paradoxical effect not of discrediting Catholic materiality but of entrenching and cementing it.

In conclusion, this essay has endeavoured to cast fresh light on Christian materiality in early modern England and the notable role played by relics, sacramentals and other devotional objects in sustaining the faith of a community under the cross. Sent as gifts and tokens to friends, relatives and patrons at home and abroad, paradoxically these fragments of the holy helped to bind together a dispersed minority. Rescued during the dissolution of the monasteries, imported from abroad, and lovingly gathered up under the scaffold, such items served as a sources of supernatural power, as powerful mementos of the courage, piety and heroism of old and new saintly heroes, as conduits of intense religious emotion, and as emblems of the self-conscious confessional identity of those who revered them. Their possession, preservation and use

104 B[ernard] G[arter], *A New Yeares Gifte, Dedicated to the Popes Holinesse, and all Catholikes Addicted to the Sea of Rome* (London: Henry Bynneman, 1579), fold-out plate.

105 Antony Wotton, *A Defence of M. Perkins Booke, Called A Reformed Catholike* (London: Felix Kyngston, for Cuthbert Burby, 1606), 389–90; Robert Pricket, *The Jesuits Miracles, or New Popish Wonders* (London: [Nicholas Okes] for C. P[urset] and R. J[ackson], 1607). The original image appeared in R. P. Andrae Eudaemon-Joannes, *Ad actionem proditoriam* (Cologne: n.p., 1610). It was also reproduced for refutation by Robert Abbot, *Antilogia adversus apologiam Andrae Eudaemon-Joannis Jesuitae pro Henrico Garneto Jesuita Proditore* (London: Thomas Adams, 1613).

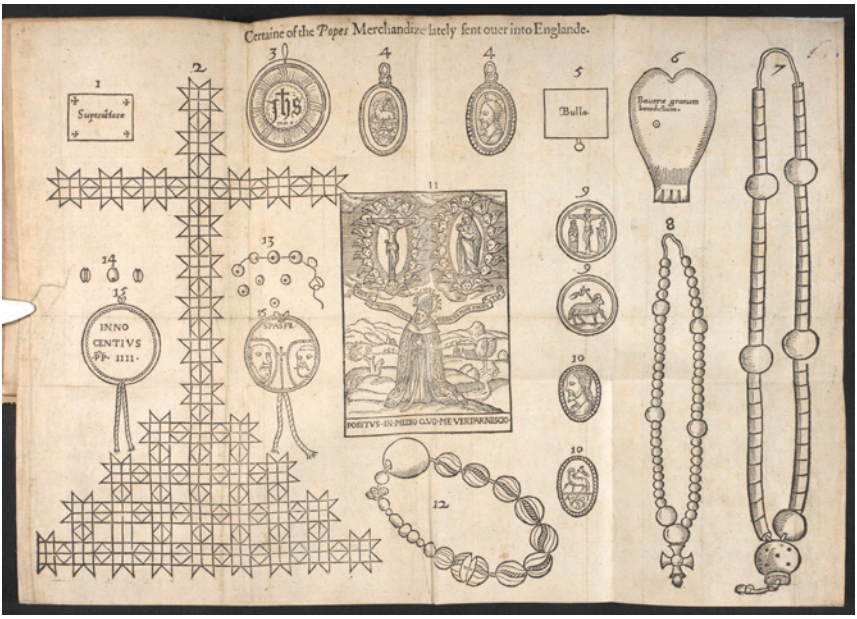
Certaine of the Popes Merchandize lately sent ouer into Englande.
Supersedeas
Bulla.
INNO CENTIVS PP. IIII.
POSITVS IN MEDIO EIVS NE VACILLABIT

FIGURE 17.8 *'Certaine of the Popes Merchandize lately sent over into Englande', in B*[*ernard*] *G*[*arter*]*, A New Yeares Gifte, Dedicated to the Popes Holinesse, and all Catholikes Addicted to the Sea of Rome* (*London: Henry Bynneman, 1579*)*; fold-out plate, woodcut.*
© THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD, 3932.DD.15.

became an act of spirited defiance against the Protestant authorities, who were simultaneously engaged in a sustained campaign to undermine their seductive and sensual appeal to the laity.

One consequence of this latter process was that relics (understood in a broad and expansive sense) became steadily intertwined in reformed thinking with the concept of ephemera. Herein, as Peter Stallybrass and others have observed, lie some of the seeds of the denigration, suspicion and distrust of material culture that modern historians have inherited from the post-Reformation era. Assumptions forged in the crucible of the polemical debates and sectarian conflicts of the era have exerted a lingering influence and contributed significantly to the neglect of the object in historical and literary study.[106] Paralleling the manner in which the pictorial and visual have been

106 Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass, Introduction, in *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, (eds.) Margreta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1–13. These assumptions

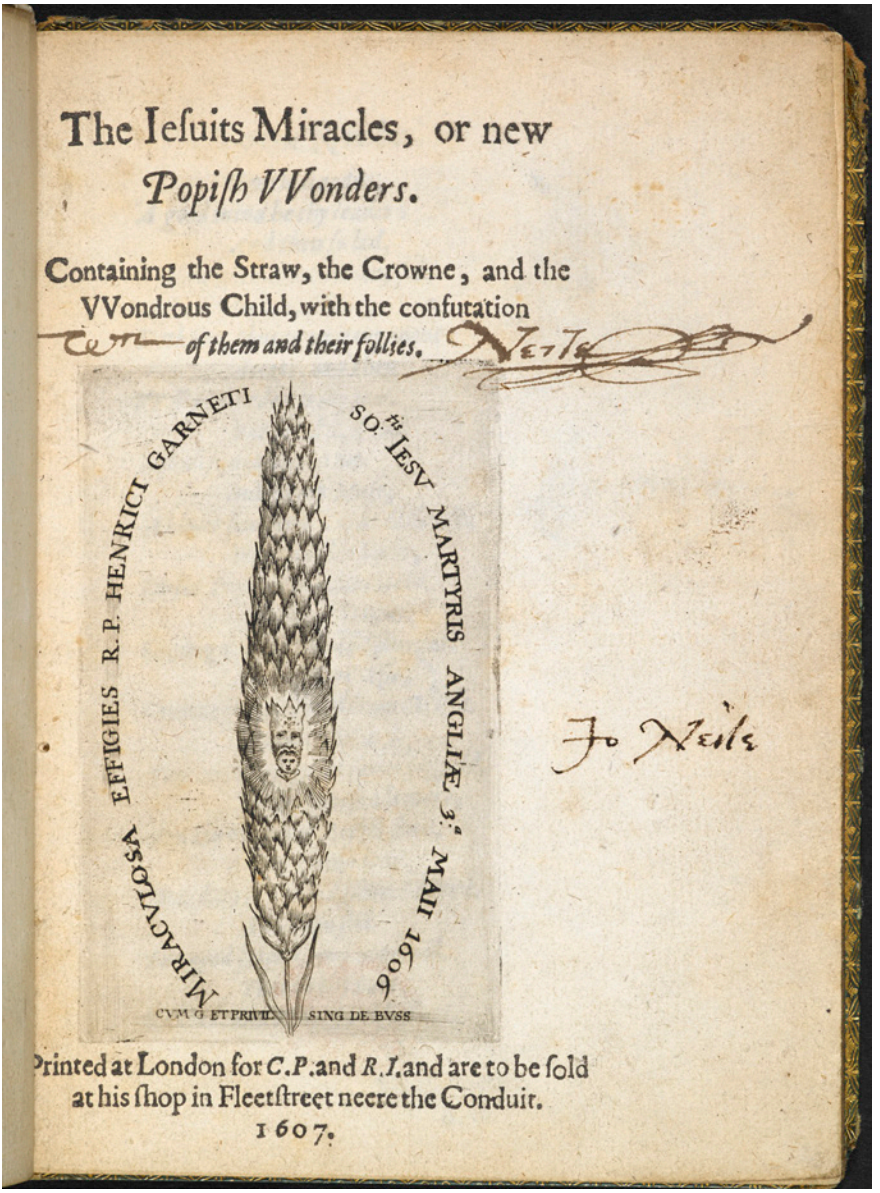
The Iesuits Miracles, or new
Popiſh VVonders.
Containing the Straw, the Crowne, and the
VVondrous Child, with the confutation
of them and their follies.
EFFIGIES R.P. HENRICI GARNETI
SO. IESV MARTYRIS ANGLIÆ 3.a MAII 1606
MIRACVLOSA
CVM G ET PRIVIL SING DE BVSS
Printed at London for C.P. and R.I. and are to be ſold
at his ſhop in Fleetſtreet neere the Conduit.
1607.

FIGURE 17.9 *Anon., illustration in Robert Pricket,* The Jesuits Miracles, or New Popish Wonders (*London:* [*Nicholas Okes*] *for C. P*[*urset*] *and R. J*[*ackson*], *1607*), *woodcut.*

© THE BRITISH LIBRARY BOARD, C. 117.B.13.

regarded as marginal features of Protestant culture, so too has the material been sidelined from serious scholarly enquiry. And yet these same iconoclastic discourses have also helped to sanitise and quarantine certain categories of religious things and to render them legitimate by redefining them as artefacts of aesthetic taste and monetary value: emptied of their sacred contents, reliquaries became regarded as forms of art and commodity.[107] The migration of some relics and images into museums and galleries has enabled us to valorise and view them anew, free of the danger of idolatry. The emotional responses of awe and wonder provoked by holy objects are neutralised and thus become acceptable in this context. Simultaneously, these processes implicitly reinforce the very assumptions that created the category of idol itself.[108] In this and other ways, the conflation of material objects with popish ephemera persists in shaping the parameters within, and the lenses through which we conduct our investigations.

References

Archival Sources

London, Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster: St Edmund's College, Ware, MS 16/9/7, 9.

London, British Library, Additional MS 21203.

London, British Library, Lansdowne MS 50.

London, The National Archives, State Papers Domestic 14/21/5; 12/156/15.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 167.

Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Downside Abbey, Martyrs Box 4.

Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Downside Abbey, Bede Camm papers (Files on the English Martyrs).

York, Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, High Commission Act Book 1572–4.

Works Published before 1800

Anon. c. 1572. *A Liuely Picture Describyng the Authoritie and Substaunce of Gods Most Blessed Word, Weyghing agaynst Popish Traditions*, in *The Whole Workes of*

have also fundamentally shaped the discipline of art history, as commented by Cole and Zorach, Introduction, in *The Idol in the Age of Art*, (eds.) Cole and Zorach, 1–10, at 6.

107 Nagel, "The Afterlife of the Reliquary", 212.

108 James Simpson, *Under the Hammer: Iconoclasm in the Anglo-American Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), esp. 10–11 and ch. 4.

W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, Three Worthy Martyrs, and Principall Teachers of this Churche of England. London: John Day.

———. 1624. *The Travels of Time: Loaden with Popish Trumperies: From Great Britaine to Rome*. London: n.p.

———. c. 1625. *A Discovery of the Jesuits Trumpery, Newly Packed out of England.* [London: Henry Gosson].

———. c. 1625. *A New-yeeres-gift for the Pope.* [London]: n.p.

———. 1673. *Room for Miracles; or Miracles from Room. A Cart-Load for a Penny.* London: Stout D.

———. 1688. *Religious Reliques, or, the Sale at the Savoy; upon the Jesuits Breaking up their School and Chapel.* London: n.p.

Abbot, Robert. 1613. *Antilogia ad versus apologiam Andrae Eudaemon-Joannis Jesuitae pro Henrico Garneto Jesuita Proditore.* London: Thomas Adams.

Allen, William. 1582. *A Briefe Historie of the Glorious Martyrdom of XII. Reverend Priests.* Rheims: [J. Foigny?].

Barlow, John. 1618. *Hierons Last Fare-well.* London: William Stansby for William Butler.

Becon, Thomas. 1563. *The Reliques of Rome, Contayning all such Matters of Religion, as Have in Times Past bene Brought into the Church by the Pope and his Adherents.* London: John Day.

Bucke, John. 1589. *Instructions for the Use of the Beades.* Louvain: [I. Maes].

Calvin, John. 1561. *A Very Profitable Treatise . . . Declarynge what Great Profit Might Come to al Christendome, if there were a Regester Made of all Sainctes Bodies and other Reliques.* London: Rowland Hall.

Canisius, Peter. 1592–96. *A Summe of Christian Doctrine: Composed in Latin*. (Ed.) and trans. Henry Garnet. [London?: Henry Garnet's Press].

Chassanion, Jean. 1629. *The Merchandises of Popish Priests. Or, a Discovery of the Jesuites Trumpery Newly Packed in England.* London.

Dering, Edward. 1572. *A Briefe and Necessary Instruction.* London: J. Awdely.

Eudaemon-Joannes, R. P. Andrae. 1610. *Ad actionem pro ditoriam.* Cologne: n.p.

Foxe, Foxe. 1576. *Actes and Monuments.* London: John Day.

G[arter], B[ernard]. 1579. *A New Yeares Gifte, Dedicated to the Popes Holinesse, and all Catholikes Addicted to the Sea of Rome.* London: Henry Bynneman.

Gee, John. 1624. *The Foot out of the Snare.*London: H. L[ownes] for Robert Milbourne.

Geninges, John. 1614. *The Life and Death of Mr Edmund Geninges, Priest, Crowned with Martyrdome at London the 10. Day of November, in the Yeare M.DXCI.* St Omers: Charles Boscard.

Harsnet, Samuel. 1603. *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures.* London: James Roberts.

Historical Manuscripts Commission. 1940. *Report on the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Downshire preserved at Easthampstead Park, Berkshire*, vol. 4, *Papers of William Trumbull the Elder January 1613-August 1614*, (ed.) A. B. Hinds. London: HMSO.

Hollar, Wenceslas [attrib.]. 1641. *This burden backe to Rome.* [London].

Martin, Gregory. 1969. *Roman Sancta (1581).* Trans. by George Bruner Parks. Rome: Edizione di storia letteratura.

———. 1597. *A Treatise of Christian Peregrination* (1583 [Paris: for R. Verstegan]).

Munday, Anthony. 1582. *The English Romayne Lyfe.* London: Iohn Charlewoode, for Nicholas Ling.

Perkins, William. 1598. *A Reformed Catholike.* Cambridge: John Legat.

Polyander, John. 1611. *A Disputation against the Adoration of the Reliques of Saints Departed.* Trans. Henry Hexham. Dordrecht: George Walters.

Pricket, Robert. 1607. *The Jesuits Miracles, or New Popish Wonders.* London: [Nicholas Okes] for C. P[urset] and R. J[ackson].

Tyndale, William, John Frith and Robert Barnes. 1572. *The Whole Workes of W. Tyndall, Iohn Frith, and Doct. Barnes, Three Worthy Martyrs, and Principall Teachers of this Churche of England.* London: John Day.

Verstegan, Richard. 1587. *Theatrum crudelitatum haereticorum nostri temporis.* Antwerp: Richard Verstegan.

Wotton, Antony. 1606. *A Defence of M. Perkins Booke, Called A Reformed Catholike.* London: Felix Kyngston, for Cuthbert Burby.

Works Published after 1800

Appadurai, Arjun (ed.). 1986. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bagnoli, Martina et al. (eds.). 2010. *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe.* London: British Museum Press.

Benjamin, Walter. 2008. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Trans. James A. Underwood. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Burke, Peter. 1999. How to Become a Counter Reformation Saint. In *The Counter Reformation: The Essential Readings*, (ed.) David M. Luebke, 130–42. Oxford: Blackwell.

Camm, Bede. 1910. *Forgotten Shrines: An Account of Some Old Catholic Halls and Families in England, and of Relics and Memorials of the English Martyrs.* London: MacDonald.

Caraman, Philip. 1964. *Henry Garnet 1555–1606 and the Gunpowder Plot.* London: Longmans.

Cardwell, Edward (ed.). 1844. *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England*, 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Challoner, Richard. 1924. *Memoirs of Missionary Priests.* (Ed.) John H. Pollen. London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne.

Cranmer, Thomas. 1846. *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*. (Ed.) J. E. Cox. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

De Grazia, Margreta, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass (eds.). 1996. *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dillenger, John. 1999. *Images and Relics: Theological Perceptions and Visual Images in Sixteenth-Century Europe.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Ditchfield, Simon. 1993. Martyrs on the Move: Relics as Vindicators of Local Diversity in the Tridentine Church. In *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, (ed.) Diana Wood, Studies in Church History 3, 283–94. Oxford: Blackwell.

Driver, Martha W. 2004. *The Image in Print: Book Illustration in Late Medieval England and its Sources.* London: British Museum Press.

Duffy, Eamon. 2012. *Saints, Sacrilege and Sedition: Religion and Conflict in the Tudor Reformations.* London: Continuum.

Erasmus, Desiderius. 1977. *The Whole Familiar Colloquies of Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam.* (Ed.) and trans. Nathan Bailey. London: Hamilton, Adams.

Evangelisti, Sylvia. 2013. Material Culture. In *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, (eds.) Alexandra Bamji, Geert H. Janssen and Mary Laven, 395–416. Farnham: Ashgate.

Farago, Claire and Carol Komadina Parenteau. 2009. The Grotesque Idol: Imaginary, Symbolic and Real. In *The Idol in the Age of Art: Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern World*, (eds.) William W. Cole and Rebecca Zorach, 105–31. Farnham: Ashgate.

Foley, Henry (ed.). 1877–84. *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, 7 vols. in 8. London: Burns and Oates.

Freeman, Charles. 2011. *Holy Bones Holy Dust: How Relics Shaped the History of Medieval Europe.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Frere, Walter H. and William P. Kennedy (eds.). 1908–10. *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Period of the Reformation*, 3 vols. Alcuin Club 14–16. London: Longmans Green.

Geary, Patrick. 1994. *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Gerard, John. 1951. *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan.* (Ed.) and trans. Philip Caraman. London: Longmans, Green.

Guibert of Nogent. 2011. *Monodies and On the Relics of Saints: The Autobiography and A Manifesto of a French Monk from the Time of the Crusades.* Trans. Joseph Mcalhany and Jay Rubinstein. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Habington, Thomas. 1895–89. *A Survey of Worcestershire.* (Ed.) John Amphlett, 2 vols. Oxford: Worcestershire Historical Society.

Historical Manuscripts Commission. 1907. *Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Ancaster Preserved at Grimsthorpe*. London: HMSO.

Holmes, Peter J. (ed.). 1981. Elizabethan Casuistry. *Catholic Record Society* 67.

Hughes, Paul L. and James F. Larkin (eds.). 1973. *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Johnson, Trevor. 1996. Blood, Tears and Xavier-Water: Jesuit Missionaries and Popular Religion in the Eighteenth-Century Upper Palatinate. In *Popular Religion in Germany and Central Europe, 1400–1800*, (eds.) Bob Scribner and Trevor Johnson, 183–202. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

———. 1996. Holy Fabrications: The Catacomb Saints and the Counter Reformation in Bavaria. *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 47, no. 2: 274–97.

———. 2009. *Magistrates, Madonnas and Miracles: The Counter Reformation in the Upper Palatinate*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Jones, Malcolm. 2010. *The Print in Early Modern England: An Historical Oversight.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Kearney, James J. 2000. Trinket, Idol, Fetish: Some Notes on Iconoclasm and the Language of Materiality in Reformation England. *Shakespeare Studies* 28: 257–61.

Kunzle, David. 1973. *The Early Comic Strip: Narrative Strips and Picture Stories in the European Broadsheet from c.1450 to 1825.* Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press.

Lazure, Guy. 2007. Possessing the Sacred: Monarchy and Identity in Philip II's Relic Collection at the Escorial. *Renaissance Quarterly* 60, no. 1: 58–93.

Louthan, Howard. 2009. *Converting Bohemia: Force and Persuasion in the Catholic Reformation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2010. Tongues, Toes and Bones: Remembering Saints in Early Modern Bohemia. In *Relics and Remains*, (ed.) Alexandra Walsham, 167–83. Past and Present Supplement 5.

Malo, Robyn. 2011. Behaving Paradoxically? Wycliffites, Shrines and Relics. In *Wycliffite Controversies*, (eds.) Mishtooni Bose and J. Patrick Hornbeck II, 193–210. Turnhout: Brepols.

———. 2013. *Relics and Writing in Late Medieval England.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Marotti, Arthur F. 2005. *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Marshall, Peter. 2003. Forgery and Miracles in the Henrician Reformation. *Past and Present* 178: 39–73.

Milner, Matthew. 2011. *The Senses and the English Reformation.* Farnham: Ashgate.

Myers, Anne M. 2007. Father John Gerard's Object Lessons: Relics and Devotional Objects in *Autobiography of a Hunted Priest*. In *Catholic Culture in Early Modern England*, (eds.) Ronald Corthell, Frances E. Dolan, Christopher Highley and Arthur F. Marottim, 216–35. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Nagel, Alexander. 2010. The Afterlife of the Reliquary. In *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe*, (eds.) Martina Bagnoli et al., 211–22. London: British Museum Press.

Olds, Katrina. 2009. Visions of the Holy in Counter Reformation Spain: The Discovery and Creation of Relics in Arjona, c. 1628. In *The "Vision Thing": Studying Divine Intervention*, (eds.) William A. Christian and Gabor Klaniczay, 135–56. Budapest: Collegium Budapest.

———. 2012. The Ambiguities of the Holy: Authenticating Relics in Seventeenth-Century Spain. *Renaissance Quarterly* 65, no. 1: 135–84.

Park, Katharine. 2002. Relics of a Fertile Heart: The "Autopsy" of Clare of Montefalco. In *The Material Culture of Sex, Procreation, and Marriage in Premodern Europe*, (eds.) Anne L. McClanan and Karen Rosoff Encarnación, 115–33. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Pecock, Edward (ed.). 1866. *English Church Furniture, Ornaments and Decorations, at the Period of the Reformation. As Exhibited in a List of the Goods Destroyed in Certain Lincolnshire Churches, AD1566.* London: Hotten.

Pollen, John H. (ed.). 1906. The Life and Martyrdome of Mr Maxfield, Priest, 1616. In *Miscellanea III*, 30–58. Catholic Record Society 3. London: Catholic Record Society.

———. (ed.). 1908. *Unpublished Documents Relating to the English Martyrs*, vol. I *1584–1603.* Catholic Record Society 5. London: Catholic Record Society.

Raguin, Virginia C. and Naomi Reed Kline. 2006. Relics and the Two Thomases: Thomas of Canterbury and Thomas of Hereford as Bishop Martyr and Bishop Confessor. In *Catholic Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850: Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant History in England and America*, (ed.) Virginia C. Raguin, 69–78.Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross.

Razzall, Lucy. 2013. Containers and Containment in Early Modern Writing. PhD diss., University of Cambridge.

Redworth, Glyn. 2012. God's Gift? Sacred Relics, Gift Giving, and Luisa de Carvajal's Preparation of the Holy during the Long Reformation. *Nuncius: Journal of the Material and Visual History of Science*, 27.2: 270–88.

Rites of Durham. Being a Description or Brief Declaration of all the Ancient Monuments, Rites, and Customs Belonging or being within the Monastical Church of Durham before the Suppression. 1903. Surtees Society 107. Durham: Published for the Society by Andrews & co.

Robertson, Elizabeth and Jennifer Jahner (eds.), 2010. *Medieval and Early Modern Devotional Objects in Global Perspective: Translations of the Sacred.* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Robinson, James. 2011. *Finer than Gold: Saints and Relics in the Middle Ages.* London: British Museum Press.

Rublack, Ulinka. 2010. Grapho-Relics: Lutheranism and the Materialization of the Word. In *Relics and Remains*, (ed.) Alexandra Walsham, 144–66. Past and Present Supplement 5.

Scribner, Robert W. 1987. *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*. London: Hambledon Press.

Shell, Alison. 2007. *Oral Culture and Catholicism in Early Modern England.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Simpson, James. 2010. *Under the Hammer: Iconoclasm in the Anglo-American Tradition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Smith, Julia. 2012. Portable Christianity: Relics in the Medieval West (c. 700–1200). *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 181: 143–67.

Smith, Richard. 1954. *An Elizabethan Recusant House Comprising the Life of the Lady Magdalen Viscountess Montague* (*1538–1608*), (ed.) Alfred C. Southern. London: Sands.

Snoek, Godefridus J. C. 1995. *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist: A Process of Mutual Interaction.* Leiden: Brill.

Stallybrass, Peter. 2010. Afterword: Persons and Things. In *Medieval and Early Modern Devotional Objects in Global Perspective: Translations of the Sacred*, (eds.) Elizabeth Robertson and Jennifer Jahner, 249–56. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Suzuki, Hidesaburo. 1961. *Crypto-Kirishitan Relics in Japan*. [Kyoto]: Gen'ichido.

The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent. 1978. (Ed.) and trans. Henry J. Schroeder. Rockford, IL: Tan Books.

Walker Bynum, Caroline. 1995. *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity 200–1336.* New York: Columbia University Press.

———. 2007. *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

———. 2011. *Christian Materiality: An Essay on Religion in Late Medieval Europe.* New York: Zone Books.

Walsham, Alexandra. 2000. Domme Preachers? Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print. *Past and Present* 168: 72–123.

———. 2002. Reformed Folklore? Cautionary Tales and Oral Tradition in Early Modern England. In *The Spoken Word: Oral Culture in Britain, 1500–1850*, (eds.) Adam Fox and Daniel Woolf, 173–95. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

———. 2003. Miracles and the Counter Reformation Mission to England. *Historical Journal* 46, no. 4: 779–815.

———. 2008. Recording Superstition in Early Modern Britain: The Origins of Folklore. In *The Religion of Fools? Superstition Past and Present*, (eds.) Stephen A. Smith and Alan Knight, 178–206. Past and Present Supplement 3.

———. 2010. Skeletons in the Cupboard: Relics after the English Reformation. In *Relics and Remains*, (ed.) Alexandra Walsham, 121–43. Past and Present Supplement 5.

———. 2010. The Spider and the Bee: Printing for Refutation in Tudor England. In *Tudor Books and Readers: Materiality and the Construction of Meaning*, (ed.) John N. King, 163–90. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Watt, Tessa. 1991. *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weston, William. 1955. *The Autobiography of an Elizabethan.* (Ed.) and trans. Philip Caraman. London: Longmans, Green.

Whitehead, Maurice (ed.). 2008. *Held in Trust: 2008 Years of Sacred Culture.* Stonyhurst: St Omers Trust.

Williams, Richard L. 2010. Contesting the Everyday: The Cultural Biography of a Subversive Playing Card. In *Everyday Objects: Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture and its Meanings*, (eds.) Tara Hamling and Catherine Richardson, 241–56. Farnham: Ashgate.

Wright, Thomas (ed.). 1843. *Three Chapters of Letters Relating to the Suppression of the Monasteries.* Camden Society, 1st ser. 26.

Index of Names and Places

Abraham of Suzdal 323
Agadir 197
Alardus of Amsterdam 10, 130–34
Albergati, Nicholas 14, 324
Alberti, Leon Battista 324
Albert the Great 308
Albrecht of Mainz 331n4, 338
Albumasar 224
Allen, William 381
Almond, John 383
Altenburg 330, 336n23
Altenstein 36n26
Alvarez, Rodrigo 195
Ambrose, St 296
Amsterdam 10, 126–37, 145, 150, 153, 156, 283
Angers 245
Anne, Queen of England (wife of Richard II) 364–65
Anne of Cleves 356, 362
Anne of Denmark 366
Aquinas, Thomas, Saint 112, 115
Anthony of Padua, Saint 312, *313*
Antonello da Messina 316, *317*
Antoninus, archbishop of Florence, Saint 10, 105, 107–23
Antwerp 266, 268, 274
Arezzo 320n37
Aristotle 214
Arrowsmith, Edmund 384, 386
Ashton, Thomas 56, 64
Atkinson, Thomas 383
Augsburg 129, 213, 335
August, Duke of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel 332n9
August II (the Strong), Elector of Saxony 336
Augustine 114, 116

Baldovini, Baldovino 105–09, 122–23
Baldung, Hans 5, 128, 292n16, 312n20
Baker, Charles 386
Bamberg 375
Bam, Jacoba 11, 136
Bancroft, Richard 57
Barkworth, Mark (alias Lambert) 387
Barlow, Roger 11, 187–208, *199*
Basel 123, 165, 231
Battle 388
Bayeux 250
Bayle, Pierre 213
Baum, Johann 229
Baxter, Richard 54–55, 84–86, 88–89, 92–93, 95, 97–99
Beaufort, Margaret 360, 362–64
Beaumont-lès-Tours 12, 240, 242–44, 247–56
Becchetti, Oradea 310, 315
Becon, Thomas 393
Belbello da Pavia 39, *40*
Bellini, Jacopo 320n37
Berkhey 270, 274, 277
Bernardino of Siena, Saint 14, 312, *313*, 323, 324, 326
Beverwijk (Albany) 140, 142–44, 149, 274, 276
Beverwijk (Holland) 274–76
Biarritz 268
Boaistuau, Pierre 232n75
Boleyn, Anne 196
Bologna 305, 314, 325
Bora, Katharina von 337n27, 341n37, 342n38
Bosch, Hieronymus 297n30
Bourdelaise, Madame de la 246
Bourdelaise, Monsieur de la 246
Boxley 374
Bracciolini, Poggio 112
Brescia 320n37
Breuckelen (Brooklyn) 144n5, 145–48, 149n12, 153n20
Brie 249–50, 256
Bristol 196
Brosamer, Hans *340*
Brtnicensis, Zdenkonius 354n2
Bruegel the Elder, Pieter 265
Bruegel the Younger, Jan 297n30
Brunelleschi, Filippo 323
Bruni, Leonardo 112
Bucke, John 390
Bugenhagen, Johannes 348
Bunyan, John 83, 91, 93, 96, 99
Burton, Robert 61
Buytewech, Willem 278

Cabeza de Vaca, Alvar Nuñez 190
Cabot, Sebastian 190–196, 204, 206–7
Calderon, Hernando 195
Calicut 205
Calvin, John 219n30, 283, 285, 291–92, 295–96, 298–99, 338, 376, 390–91
Camden, William 355, 360–62
Caminha, Pedro Vaz de 204
Camm, Bede 380n37, 384, *385*
Campion, Edmund 380
Canisius, Peter 377
Carvajal y Mendoza, Luisa 381
Carrington, John 51, 55, 58
Castiglione, Francesco 107
Castro, Antonio de 383
Catesby, Robert 387
Cato 366
Caversham 391
Cennini, Cennino 323
Cesenas, Michael 110
Chad, St 378
Charles I, King of England 366
Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor 12, 191, 195–97, 213, 227
Chassanion, Jean 395
Christian II, King of Denmark 129, 133n21
Christopher, Saint 387
Cicero, Marcus Tullius 363
Claxton, William 379
Clusius, Carolus 277–78
Cochlaeus, Johann 348n47
Coenen, Adriaen 268–69
Cologne 376
Constantinople 212, 219
Corby, Ralph 380
Cornelisz van Haarlem, Cornelis 293n18, 297n30, 299
Cossa, Francesco del 13, 305–8, *306*, 312, 315–26
Cotton, John 387
Cranach the Elder, Lucas 338–39, 342, *343*, *344*, 345, *346*, 348
Cranmer, Thomas 395
Crivelli, Carlo 310, *311*, 312
Cromwell, Thomas 196, 391
Crull, Jodocus 359
Cruz, Gaspar da 212
Cuthbert, Saint 379
Daddi, Bernardo 309
Darling, Thomas 63
Darrell, John 56–57
Dart, John 360, 362
Deacon, John 57
de Gheyn II, Jacques 278
Del Biondo, Giovanno 41, *42*
della Robbia, Andrea 314
del Puerto, Francisco 194–95, 205
Dering, Edward 398
Diaz de Solis, Juan 192–94
Digby, Kenelm 384
Digby, Sir Everard 387
Donne, John 355
Dort 285
Douai 383
Downside 378n30, 384
Draud, Georg 172, 173
Dresden 13, 169
Dugdale, Richard 9, 50–64
Duke, Edmund 387
Dürer, Albrecht 8, 128, 164, 260, 267, 270, 277, 283, 287, *288*, *290*, 299, 314n27, 338n31
Durham 379, 387

Earls Colne 84, 85, 88, 90, 92, 93, 96
Eden, Richard 194
Edward the Confessor 356, 358, 364–65
Edward I 359, 360–63, 365
Edward III, King of England 359–63, 365–66
Edward VI, King of England 392
Einsiedeln 163
Eisenmenger, Samuel 168
Eisleben 175–78, 333–35, 337, 348, 350n51
Eleanor, Queen of England 358, 360, 362, 365
Elizabeth I, Queen of England 90, 354, 355n4, 360, 366, 378, 388
Episcopus, Simon 283, 291, 295n22, 297n30
Erasmus 330, 375
Erfurt 224, 334
Ernst Casimir of Nassau-Ditz 274
Esopus (Kingston) 140, 142, 143, 149
Eugenius IV, Pope 120

Fabricius, Paul 220, *222*, 223, 227–228
Fabriano 111, 312

Fabyan, Robert 359, 361–62
Feckenham, Ioannes 364–65
Felgenhauer, Paul 179
Fernandez de Encisco, Martin 196–97, 205
Ferrybridge 84–85, 92–94, 96–97
Figulus, Benedikt 175, 179
Fincel, Job 230–32
Fischart, Johann 330
Fisher, John 14, 380
Flatbush 145–46
Florence 10, 41, 105–13, 117, 119–20, 122–23, 309, 320n37, 325
Foxe, John 392–93
Fra Angelico 320n37
Francis of Assisi, Saint 37, 310, *311*
Francis of Retz 307–8
François, duke of Anjou 245–46
Francke, August Hermann 345
Francke, Johann 176
Frankfurt 172
Frederick the Wise *see* Frederick III, Elector of Saxony
Frederick III, Elector of Saxony 331, 375
Frey, Hermann 296
Friedrich II, Palatine Elector 230–31

Garcia, Diego 195
Garnet, Henry 377, 386
Gartner, Bernard 398, *400*
Gee, John 398
Geninges, Edmund 381, *382*
Geninges, John *382*
Gerard, John 378, 388
Gernhard, Bartholomaeus 229
Gesner, Conrad 268–69
Girolamo da Cremona 308n6
Giovanni Cani da Montecatini 10, 105–08, 111–14, 119–20, 122–23
Glanvill, Joseph 54, 55n14
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von 336
Goltwurm, Caspar 230–32
Goltzius, Hendrick 270–71, *272*, 274, 277
Gondomar, Count 381
Good, Dorothy and Sarah 72, 72n23
Gossaert, Jan 293n19
Gottorff 345
Gregory the Great 28n18, 37, 44, 263
Groslier, Claude 223
Große, Henning, the Elder 173–75, 178–79
Grotius, Hugo 274, 283, 291, 299
Guibert of Nogent 375
Gutenberg, Johannes 175
Gustav Vasa, King of Sweden 335

Haarlem 272, 278
Habingdon, Sir Thomas 379
Haestens, Hendrick 277
Hailes 376, 391
Halle 333, 338, 348
Hanse, Everard 386
Harsnett, Samuel 57, 58, 398
Hartmann, Andreas 11, 161–63, *162*, 168–74, 178–79
Hascard, Pierre *see* Peter Haschaert
Haschaert, Peter 227
Haslmayr, Adam 179
Hebenstreit, Johann 224, *226*
Heller, Joachim 224, *225*
Helmstedt 337n27
Henri III, King of France 245–46
Henry III, King of England 356–62, 365
Henry V, King of England 356–57, 359–60, 362–63, 365
Henry VII, King of England 356, 359–64
Henry VIII, King of England 187, 190, 197, 207, 357, 361
Hentzner, Paul 14, 354–56, 361, 366
Herrad of Landsberg 263
Hexham, Henry 391
Hill, Richard 387
Hörnig, Bartholomäus 176–78
Hog, John 387
Holbein, Hans 203n61
Hollar, Wenceslas 370, *371*, 372
Hollesloten, Marie 11, 136–37
Holliday, Richard 387
Hondius, Hendrick 277
Honorius of Autun 263n13
Hugh of Saint Victor 308
Hungerford, Lady Anne 390

Infessura, Stefano 44
Innocent IV, Pope 205n69
Ioannes de Poliaco 110
Isabella, Queen of Spain 205n69
Isidore of Seville 308

Jacobus de Voragine 23, 30, 35
James VI and I 366
Jan Pietersz. 135–37
Jeffryes, Wylliam 362
Jena 337
Jenichen, Balthasar 172
Jenkinson, William 355
Jerome, Saint 314, 318n34
Jerusalem 215, 230, 235n92
Jewell, John 379
Joachim II, Elector of Brandenburg 335n22
John of Isenburg-Grenzau, Archbishop of Trier 230
Johann Friedrich I, Elector of Saxony 336
Johann Wilhelm, Duke of Saxony 337
John of Gaunt 362–63
John the Constant, Elector of Saxony 335
Jolly, Thomas 9, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 62
Jonas, Justus 333, 336, 338n31
Josephus, Titus Flavius 215, 230, 235n92, 283, 291
Josselin, Ralph 90, 97

Katherine, Queen of England 362–65
Katherien of Aragon 363
Katwijk 270–272, 278
Kellison, Matthew 383
Küstrin 231

Latimer, Hugh 83
Lavater, Ludwig 229
Leiden 277, 285, 391
Leinberger, Hans 314n27
Leipzig 169, 172–75, 177–78, 335n22, 36n23, 339, *340*
Lens, P. de 228
Leonardo da Vinci 323
Léry, Jean de 190
Lewes 392
l'Incarnation, Marie 255
Linck, Paul 168
Line, Anne 383
Linnaeus, Carl 273
Lippo, Filippo 314, 320, 321
Lisbon 380
Liverpool 386
Livy 234
Loaisa, Garcia Jofre de 193
London 14, 196, 354–55, 366, 370, 381, *382*, 397
Lotto, Lorenzo 318n34
Lowestoft 74
Lusher, Thomas 388, *389*
Luther, Martin 2, 11, 14, 161, 163–66, 168–69, *170*, 171–72, 174, 177, 179–80, 273, 330–351, *340*, *343*, *344*, *346*, *347*, 376
Lycosthenes, Konrad 231–32
Lyon 232, 234

Magdeburg 161, 168, 172, 176, 178, 334
Magnus, Olaus 264, 266–70
Maiano, Giuliano da 320n37
Mandeville, John 203
Mansfeld 335
Manuel Deutsch, Hans Rudolf 264, *265*
Marburg 187
Marconville, Jean de 232, 234–35
Margaret, Saint 261
Maria Pawlona, Duchess of Weimar 336
Mariazell 7
Mary I, Queen of England 378
Mary, Queen of Scots 392
Masolino 320n37
Matham, Jacob 271, 277
Mather, Cotton 55, 76
Mather, Increase 55
Mather, Nathaniel 55
Martin, Gregory 377
Maurice, Prince of Nassau 274
Maxfield, Thomas 380–81, 384–85
Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor 314n27
Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria 388
Mayne, Cuhbert 380
Medici, Catherine de' 246
Megapolensis, Johannes 151, 155n24
Melanchthon, Philipp 224
Menasseh ben Israel 298
Michele di Nofri Giogante 107
Momper, Joos de 265
Montague, Lady Magdalen 388
Montaigne, Michel de 241
Montex, Henrique 193
More, George 56
More, Henry 53
More, Thomas 14, 380
Morton, Patrick 54

Münster, Sebastian 264, *265*, 266–67, 270
Munday, Anthony 398
Murner, Thomas 338n33

Nagel, Paul 179
Napper, George 384, *385*
Nazareth 322
Nepomuk, Saint John 376
Neuber, Valentin *221*
Neuheuser, Wilhelm Eo 179
New Amsterdam (New York) 140, 144n5, 145, 149, 150, 154
Nicolò da Osimo 322
Nicholas of Cusa 14, 324–26
Nicholas V, Pope 107–8, 123
Nobréga, Manoel da 189–90
Nuremberg 7, 13, 217, 219, 224, 36n23, 354, 375
Nurse, Rebecca 72

Occo, Adolph 129
Occo, Pompeius 10, 129, 130, 133, 135
Occo, Sybrandt 11, 133, 134, 136
Oldcorne, Edward 381, *384*
Oran 191n19
Orioli, Pietro di Francesco 312, *313*, 315
Ortelius, Abraham 264, 270
Osiander, Andreas 296
Oviedo y Valdés, Gonzalo Fernándes de 204

Pagolo di Matteo Petriboni 109
Palmieri, Matteo 112
Paracelsus 161–68, *162*, 171–72, 174–75, 177, 179
Paré, Ambroise 267–68, 270
Paris 249–50, 378
Paul, Herman 144, 157
Paul, Saint 151n15, 283, 285, 299
Paul the Deacon 23, 27, 28, 30, 34, 38, 39
Pavia 9, 24–25, 27, 34
Penot, Bernard Gilles 176
Perkins, William 399
Pernambuco 192
Perry, William 59
Persons, Robert 388
Petrus de Corbaria 110
Peter, Saint 370, 390, 391n78
Philip II, King of Spain 376
Philippa, Queen of England 362–63, 365
Philips, Dirck 298n33
Piero della Francesca 316, 320n37
Pigafetta, Antonio 12, 204
Pius II, Pope 122
Pius V, Pope 388
Pizzaro, Francisco 196n40
Plato 224
Pliny the Elder 261, 263, 266, 269
Plutarch 314
Polhemius, Domine Johannes 11, 144–49, 153
Polyander, John 391
Powell, Philip 383
Poyntz, John 378
Pricket, Robert 399, *401*
Proctor, Elizabeth 72
Putnam, Thomas 77, 78
Pynson, Richard 359
Pseudo-Bonaventura 322
Ptolemy, Claudius 224
Pythagoras 224

Rabelais, François 330
Ramírez, Luis 12, 191, 204
Reiffenstein, Johann Wilhelm 345–48, *347*
Rembrandt *see* van Rijn, Rembrandt
Reuchlin, Johannes 2, 6
Ribeiro, Diogo 195–96
Richard II, King of England 358, 360, 362–63, 365–66
Ridley, Lucy 381
Rigby, John 387
Rio de Janeiro 187
Röslin, Helisaeus 179
Romano, Antoniazzo *21*, 22, 23, *26*
Rome 44, 9, 19, 20, 25, 45, 314, 349, 370, *371*, 376–78, 383, 393, *400*
Rossanna 219
Rubens, Peter Paul 299
Rudolf-August, Duke of Braunschweig-Lüneberg 336–37

Saenredam, Jacob *272*, 274, *275*, 278
Salem Village 68
Salutati, Coluccio 325
Sancti Spiritus 195
Sandford, Francis 358
San Lucar 191

San Salvador 194, 198
Santa Cruz 197n47
Santa Cruz, Alonso de 204
Santo Amaro 187
Santos 187
São Tomé 197
São Vicente 193
Scheveningen 278
Schrevelius, Theodorus 271, 274
Schwäbisch Hall 175
Sebald, Saint 13
Sebastian, Saint 9, 20, 23, 25–26, *26*, 27, *29*, *42*, 43, 310, *311*, 316, *317*
Seneca 363
Seville 190, 195, 196n40
Shaanxi 212
Shaw, Christian 54
Siena 314
Simeoni, Gabriel 232–35
Simons, Menno 298n33
Sixtus IV, Pope 23, 28, 44
Skelton, John 357, 359, 361–62, 364
Slebech 196
Soderini, Piero 203n61
Solani, Bernard 232–34
South Brent 380
Southwell, Robert 387–88
Spalatin, Georg 36n23
Speratus, Paulus 273
Speyer 338
Spranger, Gommer 283
Staden, Hans 12, 187–90, 193, 198–204, *202*, 206
St Omer 383, 388
Stonyhurst 378n30, 384
Strasbourg 217
Straub, Leonhard 173
Strozzi, Carlo 107
Strozzi, Palla 107
Stuyvesant, Peter 11, 140, 142–154, 156–57
St Vicente 198
Sutton, Robert 386

Tancke, Joachim 174
Tarnassari 205
Taylor, Zachary 56–60, 63, 64
Tessimond, William 380
Thevet, André 190, 267
Thölde, Johannes 176, 174n42
Thomas Cantilupe, Saint 378
Thomas of Canterbury, Saint 378
Thorne, Robert 191n18
Tibullus, Albius 366
Titian 310
Topsell, Edward 269
Tours 240, 248, 251, 252, 254–55
Traut, Wolf 338n31
Trent 376
Trimoille, Madame de la 255
Tully *see* Cicero
Tunis 197
Tyndale, William 393, *394*

Ubatuba 187
Ursula, Saint 376
Ushaw 378n30

Valeriano, Piero 314
Valladolid 190
Valentine, Basil 176
van Leyden, Lucas 283, 287, *289*, 292–93, 299
van Mander, Karel 272
van Oostsanen, Jacob Cornelisz 1, 10, 126–35, 137
van Rijn, Rembrandt 13, 283–99, *284*, *293*, *294*
Varthema, Ludovico di 205
Veneziano, Domenico 320n37
Venice 260–61, 309n11, 314
Vercelli, Manfred 111, 111n28
Verstegan, Richard 383
Vespucci, Amarigo 203–4
Vetreta 312
Viau, Jeanne 249
Vienna 217, 220, 223, 227, 233
Virgil 366
Vita, Saint 378
Vitelli, Nicollò 109
Vlissingen 268

Walker, John 57
Ward, Mary 378
Ward, William 386
Wartburg 168, 332–34
Weigel, Valentin 176

Weimar 233
Weston, William 379
Whittingham, Katherine 379
Wick, Johann 217
Wierix, Johann 386n57
William of Norwich, Saint 391
Williams, Abigail 72
Williams, Richard 388
Wilson, John 383
Withers, Stephen 391
Wittenberg 224, 233, 333, 337–39, 342, *344*, 345, 348n48, 349–50
Wolfenbüttel 332n9
Woodcocke, Thomas 92, 99
Worms 339
Wotton, Antony 399
Wright, Peter 386
Wyclif, John 375

York 380, 383

Zandvoort 271
Ziegler, Philip 179
Zierikzee 261
Zurich 217, 229
Zyperus, Michiel 149